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ABSTRACT

This is the first of a two-part report on a study examining the relationship between effective school-community relations and student achievement. The research represents a case study of the school-community relations program of an inner-city school serving a population of 628 black students. An interview protocol was developed to gather the perceptions of 65 parents of students in grades 4-6 regarding effective school-community relations in five areas--communication, involvement, participation, resolution, and access. This portion of the report contains a review of related literature and research, a discussion of the research methodology, and the case study. (Author/IRT)

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Technical Report No. 463

Part 1 of 2 Parts

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

by

John Earl Ingram, Jr.

Report from the Project on
Studies of Administration and Organization for Instruction

B. Dean Bowles
Faculty Associate

Wisconsin Research and Development
Center for Individualized Schooling
The University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

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This Technical Report is a doctoral dissertation reporting research supported by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling. Since it has been approved by a University Examining Committee, it has not been reviewed by the Center. It is published by the Center as a record of some of the Center's activities and as a service to the student. The bound original is in the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library.

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- providing assistance to educators which helps transfer the outcomes of research and development to improved practice in local schools and teacher education institutions

The Wisconsin Research and Development Center is supported with funds from the National Institute of Education and the University of Wisconsin.

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DEDICATION

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* * *

"Education makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave."

Henry Peter Brougham

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Abstract

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

John Earl Ingram, Jr.

Under the supervision of Professor B. Dean Bowles

This study examined the relationship between effective school-community relations and student achievement. An interview protocol was developed which gathered the perceptions of 64 parents of students in grades 4-6 regarding effective school-community relations utilizing the five variables of communication, involvement, participation, resolution, and access. The research represented a case study of the school-community relations program at an inner-city school serving a population of 628 Black students.

Data for the study were collected utilizing field methodology. The specific purposes of the study were to determine:

1. How the five variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution interact with a measure of effective school-community relations.
2. How the five variables relate to measures of student achievement.
3. How the variable of access relates to the other four variables.

Using a conceptual framework developed at the Wisconsin Research and Development Center, the study described activities at the school

in terms of the five variables. Relevant findings growing out of the data resulted in concluding statements regarding the variables' impact on effective school-community relations.

Literature and Research

Much of the existing literature indicated that the relationship between school-community relations and achievement was positive. The research appeared to contain some conceptual confusion in the interchangeable use of the concepts of involvement and participation.

Statistical Analysis

Three statistical techniques were utilized in the study; namely, Pearson product moment correlations, forward step-wise regression, and path analysis.

Case Study

Truman School carried on a wide variety of activities which involved staff, students, parents, former students, and senior citizens. A friendly atmosphere prevailed at the school. Teacher aides served as vital communication links between the school and the community. Other nonteaching staff members contributed significantly to the general open-door policy of the school.

The telephone provided the most widely used method of communication. Many parents volunteered their time and made donations. Participacion activities for parents revolved around three Parent Advisory Committees. Parents made few significant contributions toward the

formulation of policy. Resolution was handled in a friendly manner usually concerning individual problems. Most parents felt that they made significant contributions toward problem solving by having many of their suggestions adopted by school personnel. Access was gained through the principal; although, parents seldom availed themselves of this perceived entree to the school.

Findings

Communication explained 49% of the variance accounted for of effective school-community relations. Resolution explained from 8% to 18% of the variance accounted for of the eight measures of student achievement, namely Iowa Basic Skills achievement test scores and grades for reading, language, mathematics, and cumulative. Path analysis was utilized to confirm the tentative findings and suggested that resolution served as an intervening variable which mediated the effects of the remaining four variables on the measures of student achievement. Parent perceptions of effective school-community relations were only significantly correlated with language grades and cumulative grades.

Conclusions

The principal set the tone for the resolution of conflict at the school. Staff members appeared to follow this lead as they sought to resolve conflict. Two-way communication was achieved through the telephone and through notices sent to parents with a detachable portion for parental comments. Parents seldom utilized their perceived

access to the school. Involvement and participation activities served as legitimating vehicles for the presence of parents in the school.

Future research should replicate this study by varying socio-economic factors to determine if such factors significantly alter the findings of this study. Future research should also explore the possible existence of multiple models and the possible difference in the interaction patterns of the variables as the goals of the program change.

Approved by: B. Dean Bowles

Date: 8-29-78

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this research study was to examine the relationship of effective school-community relations to achievement. The study was designed to obtain parental perceptions of effective school-community relations utilizing five variables: communication, involvement, participation, resolution, and access.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Realizing the importance of school-community relations, the National Institute of Education has provided funds to the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling (hereafter referred to as the Wisconsin R & D Center) since 1973 for research in this area. One of the first tasks of the Home-School-Community Relations Project at the Wisconsin R & D Center was to design a model to describe the interactions between schools and communities in terms of the programs, processes, and goals and the interaction patterns involved. A number of research studies have attempted to determine the accuracy of the model in reflecting the ways in which schools relate with their communities.

Underlying Assumptions of School-Community Relations

Based on a number of studies, Bowles and Fruth have developed a set of ten assumptions that underlie a complete program of school-community relations. These assumptions are:

1. Home-school-community relations involves much more than the effective use of media. Communications media are definitely a part of a successful program, but their use should not be the total program.

2. The benefits of any instructional or organizational change must be made visible and tangible to the various subpublics in the school community. Thus, members of school subpublics must be involved early in implementation efforts and answers to questions must be in concrete, specific, and understandable terms.

3. An effective program of home-school-community relations involves working very closely with parents. This includes parent volunteers, home-school visits, and parent participation in educational decision making.

4. School staff members should use the educational resources available in the community. This action will both enhance the instructional program and increase the staff's knowledge of the community.

5. Members of the school staff must expand their concept of community. Educational affairs should not be considered in isolation from community affairs and municipal issues.

6. Students are the most important subpublic in a school. They are a primary source of information for their parents, they affect the way that their parents and other adults respond, and the way they perceive their education now will influence their view of schools when they are adults.

7. The relationship between the home, school, and community should be continuous and ongoing. Crisis-management should be avoided as a program is easier to build and maintain during times of tranquility than in times of torment.

8. Home-school-community relations is not equivalent with an advisory committee. While community advisory committees, ad hoc parental committees, and study groups are good strategies, they are but one part of a complete program.

9. Many diverse subpublics are now showing an increased interest in the schools. Provision should be made to insure adequate communication, to increase their involvement in school activities, to provide for participation in educational decision making, and to develop ways to resolve actual or potential conflict among them, the school, and the home.

10. Educators do not hold a monopoly on the expertise about educational philosophy, policy, and practices. School community

subpublics are better informed, more knowledgeable, and more sophisticated than in the past.[1]

These ten assumptions suggest that an effective program of school-community relations should consist of two-way communication which utilizes more than memos or newsletters. The program should be ongoing and geared to meet the needs of all the school's subpublics. Finally, all members of the school's community including teachers, parents, students, former students, senior citizens, and nonparents should be involved in the school-community relations program.

Political Context of School-Community Relations

Bowles and Fruth[2] operationalized their underlying assumptions within a political context. They viewed effective school-community relations as "good, practical politics." All activities within a school-community relations program were aimed at accomplishing two primary objectives: (a) the resolution of conflict, and (b) the allocation of resources, the choice of values, and the distribution of power. Bowles and Fruth further stated:

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[1] Adapted from Bowles, B. D., & Fruth, M. J. Improving home-school-community relations. In Lipham & Fruth, pp. 165-68; and Fruth, M. J., Bowles, B. D., & Moser, R. H. Home-school-community relations in IGE. In H. J. Klausmeier, R. A. Rossmiller, & M. Saily, pp. 260-63.

[2] Ibid., pp. 168-169.

> The political objective of any effective home-school-community relations program is the resolution of both manifest and latent conflict among the various subpublics which may be associated with policy decisions or administrative practices which determine (1) the use of available, scarce resources; (2) the value choices to be made regarding the educational program; (3) the locus of power in the educational enterprise.[3]

To further develop an effective program of school-community relations, the Home-School-Community Relations Project staff developed two models around which the project's research efforts have been organized: (a) a set of primary interaction patterns and (b) a programmatic model. These two models are displayed and discussed in detail in Chapter II.

Home-School-Community Relations Project Research

Reviewing over 300 items related to home-school-community relations, Kim, Bowles, and Fruth[4] prepared a bibliographical essay

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[3] Ibid., p. 168.

[4] Kim, J. E., Fruth, M. J., & Bowles, B. D. Home-school-community relations: The state of the art. Theoretical Paper No. 61, Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1976.

attempting to provide a conceptual framework for school-community relations, to develop a scheme of classification for existing theory and practice, and to suggest directions for further research. Three conceptual classifications resulted from their work: (a) school-community relations as an administrative function, (b) school-community relations as participation of the school's subpublics, and (c) school-community relations as a political process. The administrative function approach emphasized communication between home and school or between school and community. The public participatory approach stressed the cooperation of parents, citizens, and the community with school personnel for the improvement of education. The political process approach viewed the school system as a political subsystem of the community social system and concentrated on the interaction between the school system and the community power structure.

Miles, Bowles, and Fruth[5] conducted a series of seven case studies in an attempt to gain an understanding of how Individually Guided Education (IGE)[6] was implemented in different communities.

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[5] Miles, W. R., Bowles, B. D., & Fruth, M. J. The implementation of IGE and related home-school-community relations programs and activities: Seven case studies. Theoretical Paper No. 64, Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1976.

[6] See Klausmeier, H. J., Rossmiller, R. A., & Saily, M. Individually guided elementary education: Concepts and practices. New York: Academic Press, 1977; and Lipham, J. M., & Fruth, M. J. The principal and Individually Guided Education. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976.

This series described the implementation history of different IGE elementary schools and their school-community relations programs. The seven sites were anonymitized and summarized in the casebook:

1. Rural City. A small rural area that saw IGE as a way of upgrading instruction at the elementary level. Key elements in IGE implementation were close personal ties among administrators, staff members, and the community, and a high degree of trust shared among the school personnel, board of education members, and parents. Children served as the ambassadors of a good program to the parents.

2. Kennedy Elementary School. A middle-class school community which had numerous problems during the first year of implementation though not directly related to the IGE model. The dedication of the staff and a set of parents committed to the IGE concept helped get the school through its difficult first year. Kennedy later developed into a truly exemplary IGE elementary school.

3. Metropolitan Elementary School. This is another story where the school faced serious problems during its first year of IGE implementation. There, also, the hard work of the staff insured a successful implementation.

4. Whitney Young Elementary School. In a school composed mainly of poor Black students, IGE was the focus of a developmental effort to reconstruct the educational program. The startling educational gains of the students and the energetic programs and activities at the school helped smooth a successful implementation history.

5. Truman Elementary School. This school is in another predominantly Black district that adopted IGE and the multiunit school as developed by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center.

6. South Morris Elementary School. This is an example of a new school opening up with a new program in the wake of adverse publicity. The principal and staff won over the parents to the program only through effective two-way communication programs and activities.

7. Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. This story centers on demands from parents for more accountable school data. Instructional programming for the individual student and objective-based curriculum provide the basis for an accountable student profile.[7]

Although each case was different, the importance of effective school-community relations in terms of participation in decision making, two-way communication, and making the IGE program's benefits tangible and visible were key factors leading towards the successful implementation of an educational innovation.

Moser[8] focused on the relationship between a Puerto Rican community in a large Midwestern city and the public elementary schools serving its children. He approached identification of issue and conflict resolution using a political framework. The key issues

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[7] Ibid., pp. xi-xii.

[8] Moser, R. H. The politics of school-community relations: A Puerto Rican community. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1973.

centered on the bilingual/bicultural education program, the teacher-education program for bilingual/bicultural education, and the school system's policies that pertained to the Puerto Rican community. His major conclusions were that access to school decision makers should be increased, that conflict as an approach to change should be considered, and that a political perspective be used by the school system to perceive its relationship with communities such as the Puerto Rican community. This final recommendation suggested that politics may be a vital dimension for increasing the responsiveness of the school system.

Klenke[9] examined how two components of the IGE program--the multiunit school and the Instructional Programming Model (IPM)--were related to home-school-community relations during the implementation of IGE. Klenke made two general conclusions: (a) successful implementation of these components was dependent on the extent to which their benefits were made visible and tangible, and (b) actual or potential conflict was most likely to result from issues of differing educational values rather than from the allocation of scarce resources or the locus of power in the educational process.

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[9] Klenke, W. H. An exploratory case study of the multiunit school and the Instructional Programming Model: Power, resources values. Doctoral dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1975.

Miles[10] used a variety of anthropological field methods while gathering data concerning the implementation of IGE at four elementary schools. Miles' major findings were that studies of change often ignored the larger environment external to the institution; educators should be aware of the possibility of factionalism within their community; administrators should gain skills in and conduct community analysis; school-community relations programs and activities should be focused on the students; and key school-community influentials should be identified early and involved in the implementation of an educational innovation.

Krupa's[11] study examined a number of home-school-community relations activities in IGE schools. Using a survey instrument, data were obtained on staff roles and responsibilities, the objectives of activities, the focus of interaction, and the perceived importance and effectiveness of selected activities. Boundary spanning concepts in organizational theory were integrated with political systems theory to provide a theoretical basis for the study. The assumption that IGE schools would automatically evolve

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[10] Miles, W. R. Home-school-community relations as a political process: Four exploratory case studies of the implementation of Individually Guided Education (IGE) and home-school-community relations. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1975.

[11] Krupa, W. E. An analysis of home-school-community relations in IGE schools. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976.

alternative arrangements for home-school-community relations due to the IGE program's organizational arrangements was not supported. Principals were found to be primarily responsible for home-school-community relations with activities being centered on the processes of communication and involvement. Krupa concluded that most of the schools were engaged in a series of uncoordinated activities related to school-community relations rather than a programmatic approach.

Lake[12] conducted an in-depth analysis of one school's program of school-community relations. Interviews and questionnaires were used to examine the school's programmatic and nonprogrammatic activities. The processes of communication, involvement, and to a lesser extent resolution were seen as being utilized through the activities while analysis was found to be less evident. The focus was on the interaction between the school and either the child or the home, with the interaction between school and home perceived as the most effective.

Liechty[13] identified four empirical modes of participation and five types of educational participators utilizing a questionnaire in his study. The four modes were parochial, cooperative, electoral,

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[12] Lake, R. V. An analysis of home-school-community relations program in an IGE school. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976.

[13] Liechty, T. A. Pattern of citizen participation in education. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977.

and dynamic. The five types of participators were activists, parents, citizens, voters, and inactives. The largest groups were made up of activists (37%) and parents (24%). These two groups combined accounted for 81% of the total activity. Liechty drew two conclusions from the data by suggesting that (a) future research identify why people participate in educational activities selectively and (b) future research determine the results of selective participation on the formulation of educational policy.

Karges[14] explored the implementation of the Home-School-Community Relations Model to determine whether the specified program and processes were viable. After conducting a needs assessment with staff and school community members, Karges used three approaches to change: (a) a school-wide focus on reporting pupil progress, (b) a graduate course on school-community relations, and (c) direct implementation of activities as a project coordinator. The daily presence of a project coordinator raised staff awareness to school-community relations. An evaluation indicated that the implementation of the school-community relations model was a viable option.

Bartels[15] spent three months in an urban, inner-city elementary school as a participant observer. Her data indicated that the

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[14] Karges, M. L. The implementation, evaluation, and refinement of the home-school-community relations interaction model. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977.

[15] Bartels, L. I. Supports and constraints to home-school-community relations in an urban, inner-city IGE school. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977.

principal of the school was the critical actor in fostering and directing the school-community relations program. The behavior of the principal consisted of both supporting and constraining factors regarding the success of a school-community relations program. Supporting factors included an open door policy and initiating structure for the educational environment. Constraining factors included teacher transciency and negative attitudes of some teaching personnel. The reallocation of resources existing for the school was found to be a key need. A recommendation was made that school personnel should seek the proper skills necessary for working cooperatively with parents before a crisis situation arose.

Raskas[16] is currently conducting a study that investigates the topic of citizen participation in educational decision making. This study is part of a continuing effort of the Home-School-Community Relations Project to research educational issues utilizing its programmatic model.

Accountability and Achievement

As educational budgets spiral upward, there has been increasing pressure brought by taxpayers and parents for school accountability. With the largest portion of the educational budget allocated to

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[16] Raskas, H. I. Patterns of citizen participation: Four schools of political thought. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, in progress.

salaries, many taxpayers and parents are questioning the relationship between school costs and student performance. Wagoner stated:

> In the negotiations process this means that school boards must bargain to establish and maintain their own rights--the right to expect that teachers will improve the performance of their students, the right to hold teachers accountable for their pupils' failures and to reward them for their successes in the classroom.[17]

Commenting further Rice wrote:

> Public education is not our special birthright. Rather, it is a tax supported service in which teachers participate. Public education belongs to all the people, and all the people have the right to seek its improvement, to determine its purposes, and to evaluate its outcomes.[18]

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[17] Wagoner, D. E. Do you know anything at all about how well or how much teachers teach? American School Board Journal, August 1970, 158(21).

[18] Rice, A. H. Good teachers stand to benefit from accountability plans. Nation's Schools, December 1970, 86(16).

The accountability thrust seems to be directed in the areas of basic skills, that is improving pupils' reading and arithmetic abilities. A controversy over the cognitive goal of literacy taking precedence over the affective goals may arise.

The move in many states toward minimum competency testing parallels the call for accountability. Pipho reported:

> What began as a startling idea in California, Florida, Oregon, and a handful of other states in 1975 and 1976 has now arrived in some form in each state. As of March 15, 1978, thirty three states had taken some type of action to mandate the setting of minimum competency standards for elementary and secondary students.[19]

Hart commented:

> Citizens have a right to expect that, as a result of twelve years of public schooling, students will achieve functional literacy. Legislators have a responsibility to provide tools and resources to accomplish this.[20]

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[19] Pipho, C. Minimum competency testing in 1978: A look at state standards. Phi Delta Kappan, May 1978, 59(9), 585-587.

[20] Hart, G. K. The California pupil proficiency law as viewed by its author. Phi Delta Kappan, May 1978, 59(9), 592-595.

Gallup[21] reported that 83% of the public drawn from a national sample expressed approval of the "back to basics" movement.

RELATED LITERATURE

The following sections of this chapter are designed to summarize the literature on school-community relations generally and, more specifically, its relationship to student achievement.

School-Community Relations

Many persons who have children attending school are very interested in the program of the school while others must have their interest encouraged. The relations between school and community occur regardless of the efforts exerted by school personnel. The cooperation of the community is often secured through the leadership displayed by the school. This procedure is developed by planning activities for children through the cooperative efforts of school and community.

Moehlman suggested that:

> Interpretation was a two-way process between school and community, and that as understanding the school was important to the community was important to the school.[22]

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[21] Gallup, G. H. Ninth annual Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1977, 59(1), 33-48.

[22] Moehlman, A. B. Social interpretation. New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1938, p. 57.

Reeder[23] emphasized the importance of a mutual agreement between school and community as to the role and function of the school. Wrinkle and Gilchrist[24] stated that the school is what public opinion makes it; therefore, teachers individually or collectively must work to create public opinion.

Calhoun[25] declared that school-community relations developed through one of five approaches which included: (a) the town meeting, (b) the hands-off approach, (c) the selling approach, (d) the educational interpretation approach, and (e) the cooperative endeavor approach. Charters[26] referred to public relations for schools as paralleling the rise of industrial public relations, the organization of parent-teacher groups, and the increased use of public opinion polls, and school increase in the emphasis on school-community relations has come from administrators and other school personnel.

Communication Literature

One approach to school-community relations is operationalized through an emphasis on communication activities. The National

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[23] Reeder, W. G. An introduction to public school relations. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953, p. 1.

[24] Wrinkle, W. L., & Gilchrist, R. S. Secondary education for American democracy. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1942, p. 19.

[25] Calhoun, C. C. Evolution of public relations theory. Business Educational Forum, December 1965.

[26] Charters, W. W., Jr. Public relations. In C. W. Harris (Ed.), Encyclopedia of educational research (4th ed.). New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969, p. 1028.

School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)[27] asserted that the public was interested in obtaining more information about new innovations and techniques that are being tried in education. The American Association of School Administrators[28] claimed that the use of a variety of activities would increase public understanding of school programs.

The recommended list included:

1. speeches
2. newspapers
3. radio and television
4. slide films and motion pictures
5. letters
6. graphic and pictorial materials
7. student publications
8. reports
9. exhibits

Kindred[29] gave five primary elements of communication theory for the transmission of a message. These were:

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[27] National School Public Relations Association & National Association of Elementary School Principals. Elementary school PR tool kit: For building better understanding. Arlington, Virginia: NSPRA and NAESP, 1974, pp. 7; 30.

[28] American Association of School Administrators. Public relations for America's schools. Washington, D.C.: AASA, 1950, pp. 281-303.

[29] Kindred, L. A., Bagin, D., & Gallagher, D. R. The school and community relations. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976, p. 75.

1. the source of information or feeling about something,

2. a person (encoder) who takes the information or feeling and puts it in message form,

3. a channel that carries the message,

4. a person (decoder) who retranslates or interprets the message, and

5. a receiver who reacts to the message by either accepting or rejecting it.

Hymes[30] suggested that when teachers visit the home, they focus on information that will aid them in planning to meet the needs of their students. When parents visit the school, they should receive information that will help them clarify educational issues that arise in the community. Dapper[31] and Kelly[32] stressed the importance of the school gaining accurate knowledge about the community. Stackig[33] emphasized the importance of internal and external communication as a tool for advancing education, not as an end unto itself.

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[30] Hymes, J. L. Effective home-school-relations. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953, pp. 135; 156.

[31] Dapper, G. Public relations for educators. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1964.

[32] Kelly, S. P. Know your community. American School Board Journal, May 1968, 14-15.

[33] Stackig, B. B. Professional handbook for school-community information services. In Suburban Area Study Group (Eds.), The School and the community: A communications study. Washington, D.C.: Meyer Foundation, 1966, p. 7.

Wendorf[34] pointed out the importance of coffee hours at which administrators have an opportunity to talk informally with small groups of parents.

Parent-teacher conferences often provide an opportunity for productive discussion which can benefit the student.

Otto and Sanders[35] stated that the degree to which the home and the school supplement each other in their efforts to foster a wholesome school environment helps determine the child's total motivational setting. Hunter[36] emphasized the need to communicate in terms that were meaningful to parents.

Communication Research

The research concerning communication and school-community relations is wide and varied. Evidence of the need for and value of effective two-way communication between schools and taxpayers was gathered by researchers at Stanford University. Carter[37] reported on studies which were based on interviews with community leaders in

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[34] Wendorf, R. A. Communicating with parents. Clearing House, 1963, 37, 291.

[35] Otto, H. J., & Sanders, D. C. Elementary school organization and administration. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1964, p. 164.

[36] Hunter, M. C. Home-school communication. The National Elementary Principal, November 1967, 131.

[37] Carter, R. F. Voters and their schools. Stanford, California: Stanford University Institute for Communication Research, 1960, pp. 4-16.

82 school districts in the nation and interviews with a representative sample of voters in four cities. He found that:

1. Voters think schools are good in general, but are criticized for having too many frills, allowing too much play, and lacking discipline.

2. Voters think the most important task of schools is to teach the basics--reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and speaking.

3. Voters think the least important task of schools is affording cultural activities--art and music--and providing industrial arts education.

4. Voters who received from and sent to the school some form of communication on a regular basis were likely to vote and vote favorably for school related issues.

Chaffee and Ward[38] summarized a number of studies and made three points:

> It is difficult to assess the over-all adequacy of public knowledge about schools, since no "baseline" of comparison is available. Parents seem to feel generally well-informed but show some desire for more information. In a study

[38] Chaffee, S. H., & Ward, S. Channels of communication in school-community relations. Journalism Monographs, September 1968, 8.

> of seven communities in Washington...one elementary school parent in four could not name his child's teacher. Over-all, parents tend to be more informed than others.

Wilder[39] implied in his study that poor communication caused differences to arise between subpublics within the school community.

Hicks[40] studied the effects of mass media and home visits on parents' attitudes toward school. Teacher aides visited the homes of 434 randomly selected parents of children who attended schools located in low-income areas of a Midwestern city. Most homes were visited twice and a few were visited three times. The results of this study indicated that the use of mass media was successful in creating greater awareness of the school program and in fostering positive attitudes toward school; however, the personal contact with teacher aides was found to be more effective than the use of mass media.

Grout[41] found that there were sizeable gains in public understanding of the school's program as a result of four articles which

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[39] Wilder, D. Actual and perceived consensus on educational goals between school and community, 1968. (ER 023 939)

[40] Hicks, L. B. An experiment in school-community relations. A paper prepared for East St. Louis School District No. 189, 1967, pp. 7-14.

[41] Grout, S. W. Interpreting education through the local newspaper. Administrator's Notebook, October 1956, 5, 1-4.

appeared in the local newspaper. Cohn[42] also found that people were influenced by what they read about the educational problems in the community. He discovered that the local newspaper is an effective medium for relating educational problems to the community. Klapper[43] implied from his review of the literature that face-to-face communication is a more effective means of persuasion than mass media because of characteristics that are manifested from the personal relationships involved. Sloan[44] found in a study of communication between 286 families and the school that the most frequent way parents learned about the school was through their children, the school newspaper, and parent-teacher conferences. Parents preferred to be informed through (a) the school newspaper, (b) parent-teacher conferences, (c) PTA, (d) being told by their child, and (e) a phone call or note from the teacher.

The review of literature and research regarding communication indicates that educators need to know what factors contribute to effective communication with the school's subpublics. Educators should be sensitive to quality and quantity of the message to be communicated.

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[42] Cohn, A. A. The relationship of a community newspaper to the educational problems of its community. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1959, pp. 254-257.

[43] Klapper, J. T. The effects of mass media. New York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, 1949.

[44] Sloan, B. School-home communications. Unpublished Specialist's Thesis, University of Toledo, 1973, p. 41.

Involvement Literature

This section includes literature that stresses the importance of community involvement as a means to obtain and maintain good school-community relations. Involvement is utilized in various ways in the literature; however, it is defined here as the contribution of time, energy, and expertise to the school. Many educators emphasized that citizen involvement in school activities served to promote better understanding of the school, encouraged citizen support for the school, clarified the goals and objectives of the school, and helped students improve in basic skills mastery.

Blankenship[45] reported that citizen participation was necessary for the local schools to function properly. He added that citizens and other interested persons should play advisory roles in areas of curriculum, budget, building, and policy. Osborne[46] discussed a program where citizens and parents shared their skills and experiences with school children. Saxe[47] identified a variety of ways to

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[45] Blankenship, A. H. Local school systems benefit by citizen cooperation. In Citizen cooperation for better schools. 53rd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954.

[46] Osborne, E. The parent-teacher partnership. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959, p. 45.

[47] Saxe, R. W. School-community interaction. Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corp., 1975, pp. 146-149.

utilize volunteer skills in the school program, including such uses as:

1. teaching mini-courses
2. tutoring
3. teaching arts and crafts
4. serving as library assistant

Weinstein[48] suggested development and coordination of resources and expertise of volunteers with special skills. Murray[49] viewed the role of volunteers to include:

1. clerical aide
2. room parent
3. paper corrector
4. club advisor
5. field trip chaperone
6. classroom aide
7. library aide
8. advisory council member

Conant[50] saw the value of community involvement as helping parents gain first hand knowledge of the school program. The National

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[48] Weinstein, G. Tapping community talent. Scholastic Teacher, November 1972.

[49] Murray, A. Parent power in the schools. Chelmsford, Mass.: The Merrimack Education Center, 1974.

[50] Conant, M. M. Teachers and parents: Changing roles and goals. Childhood Education, December 1971, 48, 116.

School Public Relations Association[51] suggested that one way to motivate people to support the schools is to involve them directly in the planning of the programs to be implemented. Finally, Kindred[52] encouraged the use of parents as resource persons who would prepare materials in their areas of expertise.

Involvement Research

Gordon,[53] reporting on a Florida project of parent education, indicated that parents could aid the instructional program of the school at home and at school. Twenty-one educators made one visit per week to the homes of 300 parents who had children ranging in age from three months to three years. These parents were taught to teach their children at home. When the program was evaluated after three years of operation, it was found that parents, older children in the families, and the children directly involved in the program had more positive attitudes toward school.

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[51] National School Public Relations Association. Public relations gold mine (Vol. 10). Washington, D.C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1968, p. 51.

[52] Kindred, L. W. School public relations. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1957, p. 146.

[53] Gordon, I. J. Self help approach: Parents as teachers. Compact, December 1969, 3, 32-35.

Lewis[54] reported on a similar project conducted in an elementary school in New York City. Staff members and parents developed school goals and developed understanding of themselves and their relationships to each other. Progress was reported to have been made toward reaching the goals set because parents genuinely felt they were welcomed and were appreciated at the school.

Leis[55] studied the relationship between school openness and parental opinion. A positive relationship was found to exist between open climate and parent opinion of the school.

Baker[56] conducted a study which compared 10 classes of students whose parents were regularly involved in school activities to 10 classes where parent involvement was lacking. She reported significant differences in the attitudes of parents, teachers, and administrators. Where parent involvement was high in the 10 classes, the attitudes were more positive. Cloward and Jones[57] investigated the

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[54] Lewis, A. C. Communication ideas in action. Washington, D.C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1970, pp. 43-49.

[55] Leis, G. A. A study of the relationship among: Organizational climate of selected Colorado secondary schools, parent opinion of these schools, and parent demographic variables. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University, 1970.

[56] Baker, J. A. A study of the attitudes of parents, teachers, and principals toward parental involvement in school activities. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, North Texas State Universtiy, 1973.

[57] Cloward, R. A., & Jones, J. A. Social class: Educational attitudes and participation. In A. H. Passow (Ed.), Education in depressed areas. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963.

correlation between involvement in school affairs and parents' attitudes toward the importance of education. They reported that parent involvement is positively correlated with the importance parents place on education. Grewick[58] studied the effect on parent attitudes of a parent involvement program being instituted. The program included letters to parents, parent observation of classroom instruction, and parent-teacher conferences. He reported no significant change in the attitudes of parents.

Participation Literature

Many authors, as indicated by the preceding references, have advocated that good school-community relations must include effective communication between and among the school's subpublics and must include effective involvement of parents' and nonparents' contributions of time, energy, and expertise. Various authors indicate that another essential process that helps to develop good school-community relations is meaningful participation in decision making affecting educational policies and practices.

Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) have been in existence for a considerable period of time. Recently, some writers have termed the PTA as being ineffective as a decision-making body. However,

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[58] Grewick, D. A. A study of parental attitudes toward selected aspects of public education through intensive involvement in a new instructional program. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1967.

Jencks[59] suggested that parent participation in PTA activities may be positively linked to the development of effective school programs. Fitzwater[60] reported that parents should be involved in the school's operation as follows:

1. helping to plan programs
2. helping to initiate programs
3. helping to evaluate programs

Pellegrino[61] viewed the importance of parent participation in educational decision making as critical due to major criticism being lodged toward schools currently.

Gittell[62] suggested that charges of unresponsiveness often arise when school personnel do not actively seek the participation of citizens in educational decision making. Bowman and Morgan[63] indicated that collaboration among the school, parents, and community will foster the attainment of a higher quality of educational output.

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[59] Jencks, C. The Coleman report and conventional wisdom. In F. Musteller & D. Moynihan (Eds.), On equality of educational opportunity. New York: Vintage Books, 1972.

[60] Fitzwater, G. H. Cooperation helps individual classrooms. In N. B. Henry (Ed.), Citizen cooperation for better public schools. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1954.

[61] Pellegrino, J. Parent participation. Education Canada, March 1973.

[62] Gittell, M. Community participation in education. A paper prepared for the Teacher Corps Associates, November 1974, p. 2.

[63] Bowman, G. W., & Morgan, H. Parent involvement. A working paper produced at Bank Street College, October 1969, p. 3.

Cunningham[64] suggested that the participation of citizens in educational decision making will help increase support for and confidence in the school.

Parent advisory committees have increased in number as more federal programs have become a part of the education scene. Blumenburg[65] viewed community participation as sharing in the decision-making process. The principal is seen as a critical actor in this process seeking advice from all segments of the school and the community. Zimmerman[66] suggested that it is important for citizens and school personnel to develop a partnership in making educational decisions. Finally, Gittell[67] stated that the feedback process which leads to policy revisions is enhanced through citizen participation in educational decision making.

Participation Research

Safran[68] conducted a nation-wide survey from which he reported that 14 states had requirements for parental participation in

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[64] Cunningham, L. L. Community involvement in change. Educational Leadership, 1970, 27, 366.

[65] Blumenberg, E. The school-community advisory council: For better or for worse? Journal of Secondary Education, February 1971, 46, 60.

[66] Zimmerman, H. M. The community and the schools: Who are the decision-makers? National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, May 1969, 53, 175.

[67] Gittell, M. Community participation, p. 3.

[68] Safran, D. Preparing teachers for parent involvement. Berkeley, Calif.: Center for the Study of Parent Involvement, October 1974.

educational decisions. Havighurst[69] studied local school administration and community participation in educational policy decision making. He concluded that the areas of budget, personnel, and curriculum were addressed toward the local community. Hoke, Basile, and Whiting[70] reported on a federally financed project designed to identify the causes of a decline in public attitudes toward public schools and to suggest ways to reverse this trend. The authors concluded that, "...the more individuals involved and committed to a goal, the greater are its chances for success." They stated further that individuals become more committed to a goal if they are involved in the project at the goal-setting stage. Sloan[71] studied the amount of participation parents actually would like in school activities, and concluded that parents were interested in making decisions concerning dress codes, new innovations, discipline procedures, special learning problems of their children, class size, and lunch programs.

Resolution Literature

The objective of effective school-community relations is the resolution of actual or potential conflict, allocating of resources,

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[69] Havighurst, R. J. Interaction between society and education in Chicago. Final Report. Chicago: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1968.

[70] Hoke, F. A., Basile, D. P., & Whiting, C. R. How to improve community attitudes. Phi Delta Kappan, September 1971, 53, 30-32.

[71] Sloan, B. School-home communications. Unpublished Specialist's Thesis, University of Toledo, 1973, p. 41.

selecting values, and distributing power through the processes of communication, involvement, and participation. For an educator to be effective, Bowles and Fruth[72] stated he or she must be able to analyze issues properly, communicate effectively, involve others appropriately, and utilize the best mode for resolution--rational decision making, persuasion, bargaining, or power-play techniques, as the situation dictates.

Turner[73] suggested two basic approaches to gain political power for educational ends. These were: (a) identification of political power holders and issues receiving top priority; and (b) development of the largest solidary group. Carter[74] viewed the principal, as an educational leader, and stated that he or she will be ineffective unless he or she can exert considerable influence. The principal must strive to create the leadership, which results in teamwork and group planning.

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[72] Bowles, B. D., & Fruth, M. J. Improving home-school-community relations. In J. M. Lipham & M. J. Fruth (Eds.), The principal and Individually Guided Education. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976, p. 183.

[73] Turner, H. E. Mobilizing political power for action. Educational Leadership, 1970, 28.

[74] Carter, D. G. The principal in the socio-political system of the school. A paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1975.

Finally, the resolution approach to school-community relations is discussed in Sestak and Frerich's[75] articles on the political role of the principal. They viewed the principal as the harmonizer between the school and the community.

Resolution Research

Levin and Setin[76] conducted a case study which attempted to hold school-community relations forums during the 1968 New York Teachers Strike. Their conclusions were that the forums channelled existing conflict toward long-term benefits of the community.

Kelly[77] examined the California school board recall election as a mechanism for the resolution of community conflict. Kelly stated that the level of conflict was significantly higher during the pre-recall and recall period than at the start of the recall campaign. It was further noted that the campaign polarized the community and prolonged the conflict within the community. Konrad[78] indicated that social status was a good indicator of a community's ability

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[75] Sestak, M. E., & Frerich, D. D. The principal's role in school-community relations. Selected articles for elementary principals. Washington, D.C.: Department of Elementary Principals, National Education Association, 1968.

[76] Levin, G., & Stein, D. D. System intervention in a school-community conflict. The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 1970, 6.

[77] Kelly, J. A., Jr. Conflict resolution and California school board recall elections. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1967.

[78] Konrad, A. C. Social status and conflict management in local school districts. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1966.

to manage conflict within a school system. Another finding was that there was no difference in the social status of school board members in conflict communities and nonconflict communites.

Minar[79] identified community characteristics accompanying electoral conflict. Communities with higher educational and occupational levels were found to have lower levels of dissent. The findings indicated that the low conflict communities possessed high conflict-management skills.

School-Community Relations and Student Achievement

One of the fundamental purposes of public education has been to provide children with grounding in the basic skills. These basic skills traditionally have included reading, spelling, language arts, and arithmetic. As the attention of the public has been increasingly drawn to the public schools, it has also become clear that a program of school-community relations is an important part of a school's total program. This may be for no other reason than that the economic and political support of the community is needed for the instructional program. However, increasing evidence suggests that effective school-community relations programs may contribute to positive achievement in the basic skills.

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[79] Minar, D. W. The community basis of conflict in school system politics. American Sociological Review, December 1966, 31.

The school-community relations and student achievement section of this chapter presents a review of literature that speaks specifically to school-community relations and its impact on student academic achievement and a review of research that covers the same area of concern.

Related Literature

Gittell[80] stated that parent and community involvement was an essential factor in the improved reading levels of children at I.S. 201 and Two Bridges Schools in New York City. Conant[81] concluded that schools should involve parents more deeply in the educative process. She argued that increased parental involvement in school affairs will provide additional benefits to the classroom and the school. This increased involvement will translate into a number of tangible benefits, namely:

1. parents will learn more about what the school is teaching and why,

2. teachers will fulfill their roles more fully,

3. children will see their parents in a more positive light.

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[80] Gittell, M. Urban school reform in the 70's. In R. Berube & M. Gittell (Eds.). Confrontation at Ocean-Hill Brownsville. New York: Praeger, 1969, pp. 327-334.

[81] Conant, M. M. Teacher and parent: Changing roles and goals. Childhood Education, 1971, 48, 114-118.

Foster[82] claimed that leadership can come from parent groups that can have a positive effect on the quality of education for their children. Bowman and Morgan[83] stated that citizen participation in educational decision making can improve the educational outcomes for children.

Sestak and Frerich[84] emphasized that a good school-community relations program is geared to foster a positive impact on pupil progress. Hunter[85] claimed that effective school-community relations helps create a school climate where children can be more productive academically. Lopate, Flaxman, Bynum, and Gordon[86] reported, "When parents are involved in the decision-making process of education, their children are likely to do better in school." However, Schiff[87] stated that increased parental involvement failed to result in increased student achievement gains.

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[82] Foster, F. P. Planning parent implemented programs: A guide for parents, schools, and communities. A report to the New Jersey State Department of Education and U.S. DHEW. Trenton, New Jersey: State Department of Education, February 1969, pp. 5-28.

[83] Bowman & Morgan, Parent involvement, p. 3.

[84] Sestak & Frerich, The principal's role, p. 119.

[85] Hunter, Home-school communication, pp. 24; 30.

[86] Lopate, C., Flaxman, E., Bynum, E., & Gordon, E. Some effects of parent and community participation on public education. New York: ERIC Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged, Teachers College, February 1969.

[87] Schiff, M. The educational failure of community control in inner-city New York. Phi Delta Kappan, February 1976, 375-378.

Finally, Rempson[88] concluded that increased involvement of parents helps to increase the achievement of their children.

Related Research

Research on school-community relations and its relationship to student achievement reveals mixed results. For example, Keeves[89] reported on a study conducted in Australia that home practices, including relationships between the home and the school, had a positive effect on achievement in science, but in mathematics no significant relationship was found.

Both Smith and Brace[90] and Willmon[91] reported in separate research studies, that parental demonstrations of support, interest, and involvement have consistently related to higher quality pupil performance.

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[88] Rempson, J. L. School-parent programs in depressed urban neighborhoods. In R. A. Dentler, B. Mackler, & M. E. Warshauer (Eds.), The urban Rs: Race relations as the problem in urban education. New York: Praeger, 1967, pp. 130-157.

[89] Keeves, J. P. The home, the school, and achievement in mathematics and science. Science Education, 1975, 59(4), 439-460.

[90] Smith, M. B., & Brace, C. I. When school and home focus on achievement. Educational Leadership, February 1973, 20, 314-318.

[91] Willmon, B. Parental participation as a factor in the effectiveness of Head Start programs. Journal of Educational Research, May/June 1969, 72.

Dix[92] found no significant correlation between parent involvement and student achievement, while Hopson[93] reported a significant positive correlation between parent involvement and student achievement.

Schiff[94] contrasted the effects of parents having the usual school contacts with parents who had those usual school contacts plus two parent-teacher conferences and one demonstration lesson. He reported that the students whose parents were involved in the additional school contacts had better attendance, fewer discipline problems, and greater gains in reading than parents who only had the usual school contacts. Smith[95] studied the effort of parent involvement in daily reading exercises and their children's study habits at home. Parents were given instructions on how to help their children study. She reported that children whose parents were involved in the program made significantly greater gains in vocabulary and

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[92] Dix, W. R. Relationship between selected family variables and student achievement in school. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University Teachers College, 1977.

[93] Hopson, P. J. W. Structured parental involvment: An analysis of a Title I summer parent guided at-home project. Doctoral dissertation, George Washington University, 1976.

[94] Schiff, H. J. The effect of personal contactual relationships on parents' attitudes toward and participation in local school affairs. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, 1963.

[95] Smith, M. School and home program in Flint, Michigan. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1969, pp. 1-9.

reading comprehension than children whose parents did not take part in the program. Ilioff[96] reported that parent involvement in discussion groups about their children's eighth-grade mathematics program resulted in greater achievement in mathematics for the experimental group when compared to the control group.

The two studies to follow indicate that not all research findings report a positive relationship between school-community relations and student achievement.

Kratochvil, Carkhuff, and Berenson[97] conducted a study involving 85 students, their parents, and their teachers which examined the relationships between parent and teacher communication skills and indices of student physical, emotional-interpersonal, and intellectual functioning. The authors reported that the cumulative effects of parent and teacher communication skills on student achievement were not significant. Baker[98] studied 334 children in grades

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[96] Ilioff, L. B. The effect of certain teaching practices involving systematic home-school cooperation upon the achievement of eighth grade pupils in mathematics. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1957.

[97] Kratochvil, D. W., Carkhuff, R. R., & Berenson, B. R. Cumulative effects of parent and teacher offered levels of facilitative conditions upon indices of student physical, emotional and intellectual functioning. The Journal of Educational Research, December 1969, 63, 161-163.

[98] Baker, J. L. An empirical study investigating parental participation/involvement and its effect on the achievement scores of follow-through children in the Oakland public schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, 1977.

kindergarten to third. The children's achievement scores were compared to the number of hours their parents participated in school activities. The varying hours of parent participation did not significantly effect the academic achievement of the children.

The research findings that follow report a positive relationship between schcol-community relations and student achievement. Mowry reported from a national study of the effects of parent perceptions in Head Start Program that:

> There is a strong relationship between high participation by parents and better performance on intellective and task-oriented measures. The children of parents with extensive participation in both roles (as decision makers and as learners) produce better scores on verbal intelligence, academic achievement, self concept behavioral rating in classroom and at home and change rating in both learning and activities.[99]

Brookover[100] found that junior high school students whose parents became involved in school activities showed significant

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[99] Mowry, C. E. Non-technical report: Investigation of the effects of parent participation in Head Start. Prepared for OCD, HEW-OS-72-45. Denver, Colorado: Mideo Educational Associates, Inc., November 1972.

[100] Brookover, W. B. Self-concept of ability and school achievement II. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, Bureau of Educational Research Services, 1965.

progress academically. Brookover, Erickson, and Joiner[101] in another study indicated that positive interaction among the principal, teachers, parents, and students within the school produces an atmosphere that will enhance academic performance.

Finally, Gillum, Schooley, and Novak[102] reported on a study of performance contracted learning that, where parental involvement was "pro forma" and consisted either of filling out a questionnaire or attending large group meetings, the achievement of the pupils was similar but less than the achievement where parents participated in deciding what was taught and had responsibility for working with the teachers and children.

The review of literature might lead one to conclude that studies done in the area of school-community relations and its relationship to student achievement have only been touched on tangentially. None of these works approximates the conceptual framework of this study.

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[101] Brookover, W. B., Erickson, E. L., & Joiner, L. M. Self-concept of ability and school achievement III. U.S. Office of Education, Cooperative Research Project 283. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Educational Publication Services, 1967.

[102] Gillum, R. M., Schooley, D. E., & Novak, P. E. The effects of parental involvement on student achievement in three Michigan performance contracting programs. A paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association. New York: American Educational Research Association, 1977.

This study is unique in that it suggests the use of a programmatic model in assessing the perceptions of parents in respect to school-community relations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in two areas, namely: hypothesis formulation and practical application.

Hypothesis Formulation

A Programmatic Model for Home-School-Community Relations provides the basic conceptual framework for the study. The model suggests three major components of a home-school-community relations program.

1. A planned program of activities with stated objectives, specifically assigned staff roles and responsibilities and a framework for evaluation that would be organized based upon a systematic needs assessment.

2. A set of processes which are operationalized through the program of activities. These processes are analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution.

3. A set of anticipated goals that may be attained based upon the program and processes. The goals are access, legitimacy, support, achievement, and child growth and development.[103]

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[103]Raskas, Patterns of citizen participation, p. 21.

The process variables of communication, involvement, participation, and resolution plus the goal variable of access from the framework were used as variables to determine a measure of effective school-community relations. The process variable of analysis was not used in this study because it deals with identifying issues and subpublics and how those issues and subpublics are related. The procedure of analysis is normally a function performed by school personnel.

Bartels[104] indicated that the goal of access should be more thoroughly investigated. She suggested that access might more properly fit into the model as a process variable. Bartels also suggested further study of the proper role of "resolution" in the model. Hence, this study explored the possibility that access might serve in the model as a process and that resolution might serve as an intervening variable. Additionally, this study explored the relationship among the four process variables to access. This exploration was intended to lead to a refinement of the home-school-community relations model. Therefore, the major significance of this study was to refine this conceptual model and to investigate the relationship among several school-community relations variables and student achievement.

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[104]Bartels, Supports and constraints, pp. 369-373.

Practical Applications

The implications for practitioners are to bring a greater understanding of the relative impact of the five variables on school-community relations and to determine the impact of school-community relations programs and processes on student achievement. It will be of use to school personnel to be able to determine which of the five school-community relations variables make the greatest contribution toward an effective school-community relations program. This will provide practitioners with a set of priorities to assess and possibly upgrade their school-community relations programs and processes.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This chapter has provided a summary of the literature and research relative to both school-community relations and the relationship between school-community relations and achievement.

Chapter II provides a detailed description of the conceptual framework utilized in this study and a review of the literature from which the concepts contained in the model were derived. Also included in Chapter II is a description of the methodology utilized in this study including research questions, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter III provides a case study of the school investigated in this research effort, including a description of the school's programmatic and nonprogrammatic activities.

Chapter IV provides an analysis of the empirical data collected using Pearson product moment correlations, step-wise multiple regression analysis, and path analysis.

The final chapter provides a discussion of the conclusions and implications for refinement of the Home-School-Community Relations Model and recommendations for future research.

Also included in Chapter V are suggestions for the practical application of the Home-School-Community Relations Model.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the methodology of this research study.

The methodology was designed and implemented to shed light on three basic research questions. First, how do the five variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution act independently or in combination to yield a measure of effective school-community relations?[1] Second, how do the five variables independently or in combination correlate with student achievement as measured by achievement scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (I.T.B.S.) standardized achievement test and letter grades? Third, what is the relationship among the four variables of communication, involvement, participation, and resolution to the fifth variable of access?

The methodology was guided by the conceptual framework, research questions, and definition of terms; it was described in terms of instrumentation, validity, reliability, population and sample, data collection, and data analysis.

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[1] Access appears in the home-school-community relations model as a goal. However, Bartels suggested that access might serve as a process variable in the model. Therefore, one of the basic considerations of this research is to determine the most appropriate placement of access. Thus, access is utilized as a process variable in this study, and the definition of this concept has been revised to reflect this change.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since 1973, the Home-School-Community Relations Project at the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning has been involved in research related to the establishment of a supportive, meaningful relationship between the school and the community. Although the original research in the project was specifically related to schools implementing a program of Individually Guided Education, more recent research has been directed at general school-community relations.

Underlying Principles of Good School-Community Relations

As a result of numerous studies, Bowles and Fruth[2] identified four underlying principles of effective school-community relations. These principles included:

1. The school should principally employ two-way communications.
2. The program should be ongoing.
3. The program should be geared to the needs of the school's subpublics.
4. All members of the school community should be involved in the program.

A discussion of these principles follows.

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[2] Bowles, B.D., & Fruth, M. J. Improving home-school-community relations. In J. M. Lipham & M. J. Fruth (Eds.), The principal and individually guided education. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976, pp. 165-168.

Bowles and Fruth agreed with many other educational theorists in suggesting that school-community relations is much more than the effective use of media, public relations, and communication. Good two-way communication with both the school and the community contributing and learning is essential. However, communication is not sufficient for establishing good school-community relations. The authors suggested that the creation of a supportive relationship requires the analysis of community issues and associated subpublics, community participation in decision making, community involvement of time and resources in the school program and in the resolution of school-community relations problems. They saw a similar need for the school staff members to participate in the functioning of community organizations and groups.

Bowles and Fruth also viewed good school-community relations as more than relating with the parents of students in the school. They saw the necessity of involving the entire school community in the school program. Such nonparents as senior citizens, parents of preschoolers, and parochial school parents were seen as important members of the school community.

In the opinion of Bowles and Fruth, considering school-community relations only as a school district or as a principal's responsibility is a very limiting view. They proposed, along with numerous other authors, that school-community relations should be a school responsibility, and the district should be concerned only with the broader community. Within the school, the entire staff needs to be

involved in creating good school-community relations. It is essential to include teachers, aides, secretaries, custodians, volunteers, and students, as well as the principal, in the school-community relations program. Finally Bowles and Fruth viewed school-community relations as more than crisis management involving isolated activities without a long-range orientation. They stressed the value of a well-conceived, carefully planned program. Rather than schools simply responding to problem situations, they recommended that schools be "active and preventative" in terms of relating with the community. They suggested that an ongoing, interactive, and meaningful relationship be maintained between the school and the community.

Political Context of School-Community Relations

Bowles and Fruth[3] operationalized their underlying principles within a political context. They discussed effective school-community relations as "good, practical politics." In their opinion, all activities within a school-community relations program are aimed at accomplishing two major objectives: (a) the resolution of conclict, and (b) the allocation of resources, the choice of values, and the distribution of power.

To meet these two objectives, Bowles and Fruth expressed the necessity of implementing a program within the school which

[3] Ibid., pp. 168-169

includes particular primary interaction patterns and particular interaction processes. These patterns and processes are incorporated into a School-Community Relations Primary Interaction Pattern Model (see Figure 2-1).

According to the Wisconsin R & D Center model for school-community interaction, there are critical primary interaction patterns which must exist between a school and the school community. Interaction primarily takes place in three interdependent patterns: between the child and the teacher, between the teacher and the home, and between the principal and the school community.

The model also suggests the necessity of five interaction processes: analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution. Analysis consists of three steps: (a) identifying the issues or problems which exist; (b) identifying the individuals or groups who are involved in the issues; and (c) associating the identified issues with the individuals or groups who are involved with them.

Once the analysis has taken place, plans must be developed for further analysis, communication, involvement of citizen resources, participation of the community in decision making, and resolution of problems. The plans must also include objectives for the program and for the individual activities and responsibilities of members of the staff, and an outline of the ways in which the activities and the program will be evaluated.

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

PRIMARY INTERACTION PATTERNS

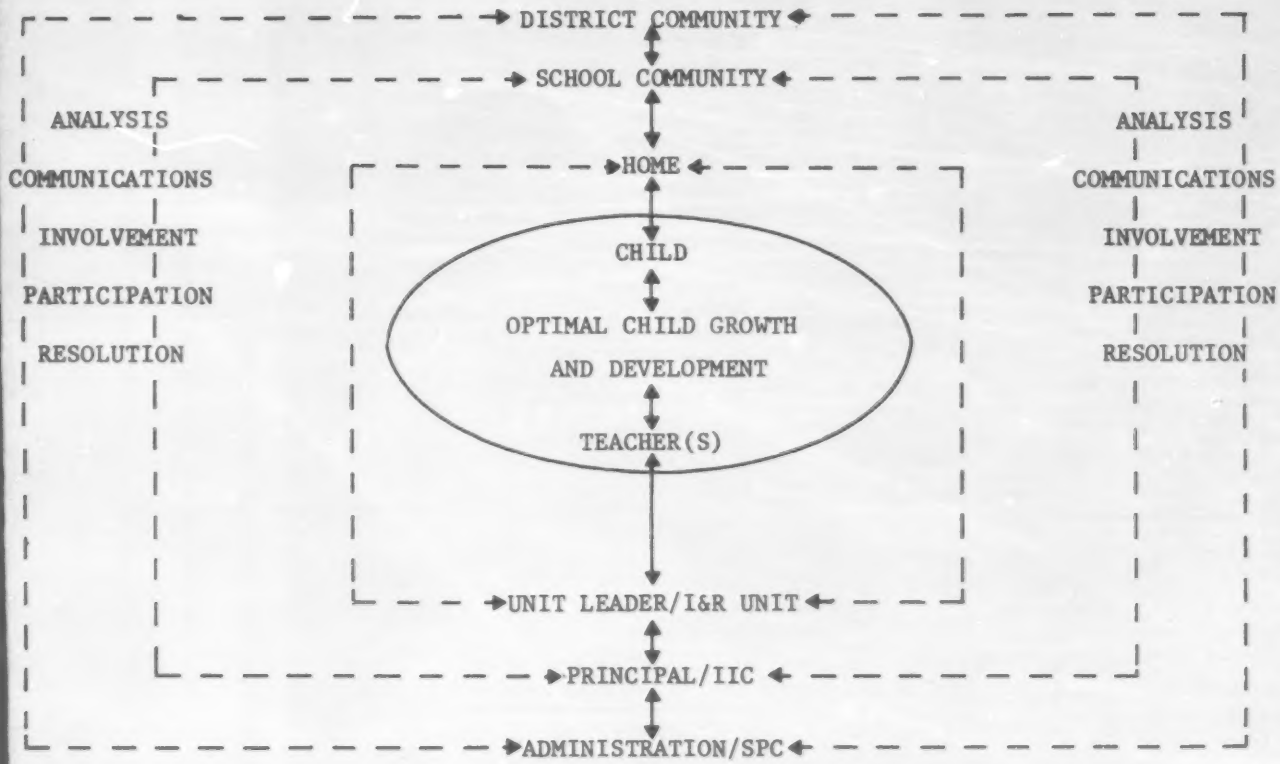

Figure 2-1.

Following planning, the program must be implemented. Both during and after program implementation, the plans must be evaluated to determine whether or not the correct solutions to problems, responsible personnel, and objectives were identified.

A Programmatic Model for Home-School-Community Relations

The Programmatic Model for Home-School-Community Relations (see Figure 2-2) grew out of the research discussed in Chapter One. The model consists of a set of activities with specific objectives, roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms for evaluation which are derived from a systematic needs assessment. Within each of the programmatic elements, the processes of analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution of conflict are utilized. The anticipated goals of such a program are access, legitimacy, support, achievement, and child growth and development.

Programmatic Elements

The programmatic elements of the model are assessment, objectives, activities, roles and responsibilities, and evaluation. These elements are defined as follows:[4]

ASSESSMENT is a programmatic element of the home-school-community relations model through which the current status

[4] Bartels, L. I. Supports and constraints to home-school-community relations in an urban, inner-city IGE school. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977, pp. 17-20.

A PROGRAMMATIC MODEL FOR HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

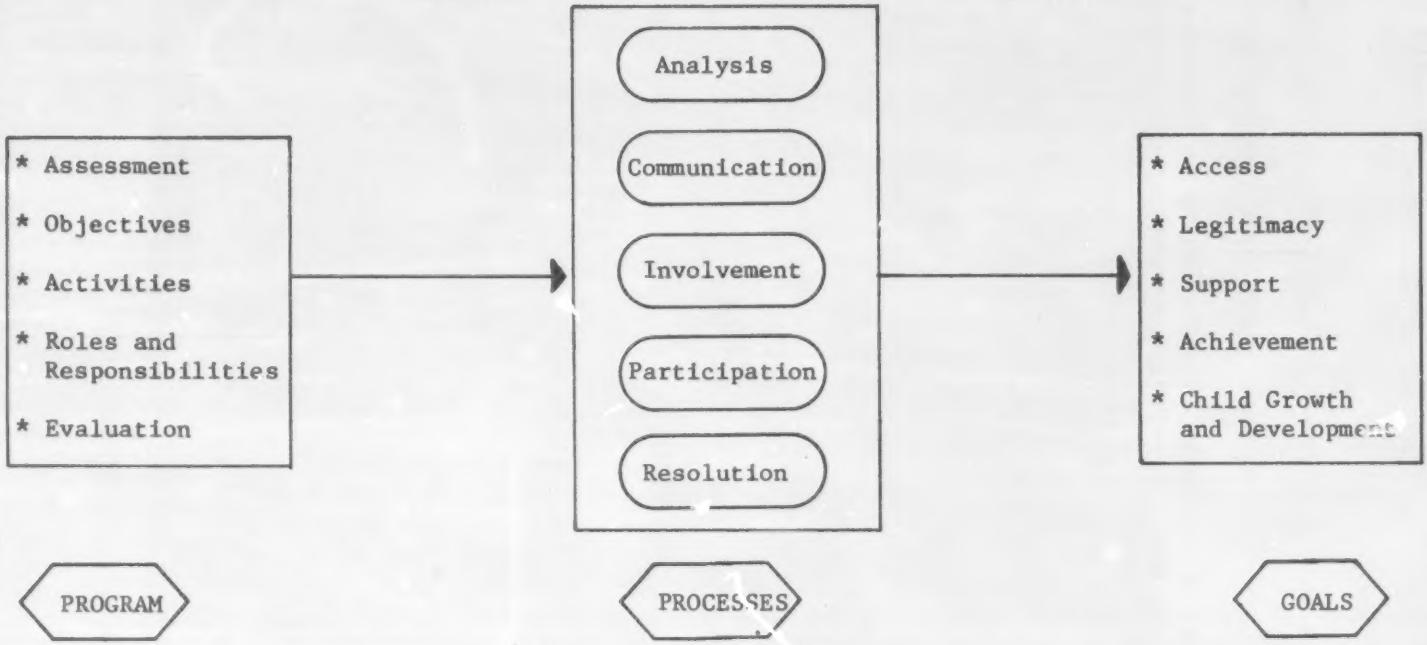

Figure 2-2. (Developed by B. Dean Bowles, Marvin J. Fruth, Lois I. Bartels, M. Lynn Karges, and Hillel I. Raskas. Home-School-Community Relations Project, Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling, Madison, Wisconsin, 1976.)

of the program, processes, subpublics, and goals are identified.

OBJECTIVES is a programmatic element of the home-school-community relations model which specifies the desired outcomes of a program in relationship to processes, subpublics, and goals.

ACTIVITIES is a programmatic element of the home-school-community relations model designed to fulfill the objectives of a home-school-community relations program.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES is a programmatic element of the home-school-community relations model which assigns tasks and functions for home-school-community relations activities.

EVALUATION is a programmatic element of the home-school-community relations model designed to determine whether the processes, objectives, and goals established for the program are achieved.

The program elements of the model are designed to provide a framework for planning, implementation, and change in the relationships between the home and the school, and the community and the school.

Processes

The interaction processes of the model are analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution. Each of these processes is defined as follows:

ANALYSIS is a process of the home-school-community relations model by which issues and subpublics are identified and related.

COMMUNICATION is a process of the home-school-community relations model which utilizes many forms of interaction among various subpublics, and between the school and the subpublics.

INVOLVEMENT is a process of the home-school-community relations model through which various subpublics contribute resources of time, energy, and expertise to a school.

PARTICIPATION is a process of the home-school-community relations model which provides entree to the decision- and policy-making processes of a school.

RESOLUTION is a process of the home-school-community relations model which is designed to solve problems and to reduce actual or potential conflict among the home, the school, and the community.

The interaction processes are the means through which the programmatic elements of the model may be designed to meet the goals and objectives of the home-school-community relations program.

Goals

The goals of a home-school-community relations program are access, legitimacy, support, achievement, and child growth and development. Each of these goals is defined as follows:

ACCESS is a goal of the home-school-community relations model which assures that various community subpublics are able to have their interests represented in the school. Members of a community subpublic may represent themselves or may choose to have an advocate or advisor who serves as a trusted confidant represent them. This person may be a school staff member, such as a teacher or the principal, or any other member of the local school community.[5]

LEGITIMACY is a goal of the home-school-community relations model which assures the acceptance, the trust, and the efficacy of the school as an institution by its various subpublics.

SUPPORT is a goal of the home-school-community relations model which provides for the economic and political resources by various subpublics in the school community sufficient to achieve the primary mission of the school as an institution.

ACHIEVEMENT is a goal of the home-school-community relations model which provides for optimal student performance in cognitive learning and the basic skills.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT is a goal of the home-school-community relations model which provides for optimal physical, social, and emotional maturity of pupils.

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[5] The definition of access has been redefined for the purposes of this study by B. D. Bowles, H. I. Raskas, and J. E. Ingram.

The goals of the model are the desired outcomes of a home-school-community relations program in which the program elements are defined and interaction processes are utilized.

Origin of Concepts Contained in the Model

This section of the chapter discusses the sources from which the concepts contained in the model were drawn. The programmatic elements and the goals will be discussed in general. The processes of communication, involvement, participation, and resolution plus the goal of access will be discussed in detail. These five variables were utilized in this research as a means of measuring parents' perceptions of school-community relations. The process of analysis was not included as a variable in this research since analysis is a function carried out by the personnel of a school.

Program Elements

The program elements include assessment, objectives, activities, roles and responsibilities, and evaluation. The program elements are items included in discussions concerning program planning or

program management found in a variety of texts.[6] One way to clarify the program elements in the model is to seek answers to the kinds of questions that confront administrators of many different types of organizations. These broad questions are:

1. What is to be done? (The answer will reveal the broad objectives and specific goals to be attained.)

2. How will the work be divided? (The answer will determine manpower use, assignment of responsibility and authority, and utilization of material. This is basic to organizing an institution.)

3. How will the work be done? (The answer will reveal policies and procedures that govern operations. It involves specification of methods and techniques already in existence and those to be developed.)

4. Who will do the work? (The answer will suggest assignments and discern requirements, availability, training classification, and utilization of personnel.)

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[6] Management by objectives and results. Prepared for American Association of School Administrators National Academy for School Executives, Arlington, Virginia, 1973; Boston, R. E. Management by objectives: A management system for education. Educational Technology, May 1972, 12, 49-51; Howell, R. A. A fresh look at management by objectives. Business Horizons, Fall 1967, 51-58; Ryan, J. How to MBO. Management Today, April 1971, 66-69; 126; Castetter, W. B. The personnel function in educational administration (2nd ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1976; Cutlip, S. M., & Center, A. H. Effective public relations (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1952; Drucker, P. F. Managing for results. New York: Harper-Row, 1964.

5. What will the work be done with? (Facilities, money, and material required to carry out the work should become more evident as the solution to this question is pursued.)

6. When will the work be done? (This involves preparing a time schedule and sequence of activities based on factors determined previously in the assignment of tasks.)

7. How well should the work be done?

8. How well is the work being done? (These last two questions are concerned with the appraisal function. The first seeks to establish standards for evaluation; the last is concerned with determining how well the standards of quality have been satisfied.)[7]

An additional question that might be included with the eight mentioned above would be: What needs to be done? (This question would cover the area of needs assessment.)

Goals

The goals of home-school-community relations expressed in the model are access, legitimacy, support, achievement, and child growth and development.

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[7] Department of Air Force, The management process. Air force manual. Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954, pp. 3-5.

Etzioni[8] stated that an organizational goal is a state of affairs which the organization is attempting to realize. While Parsons[9] contended that a goal is an image of a future state, which may or may not be brought about.

Access will be discussed in the section of the chapter that deals with processes contained in the model.[10]

Legitimacy. MacIver stated, "Legitimacy refers to (a) the sanctioned rights of some persons to make decisions, and draws on certain capacities of 'rightfulness' possessed by the maker of decisions; and (b) to the approval rendered by certain groups in the community, by certain persons, or by all the people - i.e., referendum."[11]

Miller added:

> The concept of legitimacy is also useful in describing the socially derived bases of authority and influence. Consideration of how decisions are made legitimate in the community has

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[8] Etzioni, A. A comparative analysis of complex organizations. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961, p. 71.

[9] Parsons, T. The structure of social action. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1937, p.44.

[10] Access, though a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model, will be considered a process in this study. The data resulting from this study might shed light on the proper function of access in this model.

[11] MacIver, R. M., The web of government. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1947, p. 225.

> led to a concern with the relevant formal associations as they relate to the institutionalization of authority, and the informal life of the community as it affects the investment of social property in specific decision-makers. Likewise, the informal organization of the community may provide the means by which decision-makers may reckon with and negotiate with competing centers of authority and influence, and through which strategy is made possible. [12]

Weber suggested that leaders of a political system might claim legitimacy for their rule, and members might accept their claims on three grounds:

1. Tradition. In this case legitimacy rests on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and in the need to obey leaders who exercise authority according to the traditions.

2. Exceptional personal qualities. In this case legitimacy is based on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person and the moral or political order he has revealed or ordained.

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[12] Miller, P. A. The process of decision-making within the context of community organizations. In T. N. Clark (Ed.), Community structure and decision-making: Comparative analysis. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1968, p. 311.

3. Legality. In this case legitimacy rests on a belief that power is wielded in a way that is legal; the constitutional rules, the laws and the powers of officials are accepted as binding because they are legal; what is done legally is regarded as legitimate.[13]

Dahl commented:

> When a political system is widely accepted by its members as legitimate, and when the policies of its officials and other leaders are regarded as morally binding by citizens, then the costs of compliance are low. Conversely, when legitimacy and authority are low, leaders must use more of their money, police, privileges, weapons, status, and other political resources to secure compliance.[14]

Iannaccone stated, "The traditional mutually dependent structure and ideology of the school government for most of this century rest upon two doctrines of legitimacy. Briefly, these are a belief in professionalism and a commitment toward middle class influence in education."[15]

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[13] Weber, M. The theory of social and economic organization. Trans. by A. M. Henderson & T. Parsons. New York: Oxford University Press, 1947, p. 328.

[14] Dahl, R. A. Modern political analysis. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963, p. 32.

[15] Iannaccone, L. Access and legitimacy in school-community relations. A paper prepared for the 1977 AERA Annual Meeting Symposium, New York, April 1977.

Hence, legitimacy is a concept that is grounded in the decision-making authority granted to a person and/or an institution that to some degree is legally based. Persons affected by the decisions of that person and/or institution usually defer to this perceived authority. However, once a majority or a large minority of people view that person and/or institution as acting in an illegitimate manner, conflict arises and that conflict must be resolved in some fashion.

The definition of legitimacy was drawn from the literature cited. Legitimacy as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a goal which assures the acceptance, the trust and the efficacy of the school as an institution by its various subpublics.

Support. Support is a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Mann relates that a goal shared between communities and administrators is that of increasing the affective and material support that communities give to schools. He added:

> Supporting the schools as an institution does not mean endorsing every feature or consequence of the status quo. Nor does it mean that support cannot be conditional on important changes. What support means as a goal for community involvement is that the local school is an object generally worthy of assistance, cooperation, and reinforcement. Schools can survive on acquiescence, but they need support to succeed. Thus both communities and administrators

share an interest in seeing schools become stronger, more effective places for teaching and learning.[16]

Haider noted specifically that, "Representational devices tend to be important to a citizen's sense of efficacy and overall support for a political system. It is at the heart of the democratic process and should not be minimized."[17]

Dollar support for the schools is critical. The extensive school/community communications studies conducted by Carter[18] and others at Stanford University, began with the hypothesis (and implicit hope) that public understanding leads to support for public education. They found some evidence for this hypothesis. However, they found support for public schools related to the degree of understanding among informed observers, not among the citizens as a whole. From what they observed of citizen participation, there was little evidence to suggest that one would find support related to understanding among citizens generally.

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[16] Mann, D. The politics of administrative representation. Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Company, 1976, p. 71.

[17] Haider, D. The political economy of decentralization. American Behavioral Scientist, September/October 1971, 15(1), p. 121.

[18] Carter, R. F., & Odell, W. R. The structure and process of school-community relations (Vol. V: A summary). Stanford: California Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University, 1966, pp. 53-54. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 017058)

Carter's findings indicated that understanding is related to financial support of the school. However, understanding itself is also related to and increased by participation in school affairs. Thus participation and understanding mutually influence each other and the result produces support.

Kindred reported that:

> Local taxation is the principal source of revenue for school districts. Taxes are either paid directly to the district or else to the local government. In the latter arrangement, the school budget must be submitted to officers of the political corporation. This type of financial dependence often works a hardship, because funds are diverted from education to other forms of political service. Better support of schools is assured when the local board of education is empowered by law to levy its own taxes and appeal for funds directly to the people. In either case, however, the amount of tax support depends, in the final analysis, upon the attitudes and opinions of the people. If they do not possess a knowledge of school needs and conditions, they will not approve proposals

> for increasing the rate of taxes. The failure of school boards and administrators to supply them with accurate and understandable information, to establish communication, or to give them a part in educational and financial planning, has been responsible for the inadequate support of public education.[19]

Thompson indicated that:

> School governments have little ability to persuade the electorate to support referendum issues. The lack of active participation by the electorate in school matters weakens the school's attempts to seek public support, so schools lack what in urban politics is sometimes called "clout." They may sometimes get the teachers, parents, and children to ring doorbells, or they may rely upon the predominantly middle-class PTA and the leading civic organizations on Main Street to help sell the school program, but such efforts are ineffectual compared to the canvassing a strong party organization might do.[20]

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[19] Kindred, L. W. School public relations. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957, p. 30.

[20] Thompson, J. T. Policymaking in American public education. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976, p. 75.

Campbell reported that, "The local schools developed their own political systems to support and sustain them. Clientele groups of professional educators and their 'friends of education' were developed to support them in local and state political arenas."[21]

Martin noted, "It appears that apart from financial decisions largely concerned with the question of the degree to which education should be supported, perennial issues in the politics of education do not greatly concern the lay public."[22]

Iannaccone and Cistone reported:

> The issue engaging greatest attention on the agenda is that of commanding resources for schools--largely by mobilizing support for educational funds and developing conceptual models (particularly of state funding programs). Not only is this issue first in saliency for the profession, but it also influences the profession's stance on other issues.[23]

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[21] Campbell, R. F. The folklore of local school control. School Review, Spring 1959, pp. 1-11.

[22] Martin, R. C. Government and the suburban school. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1962.

[23] Iannaccone, L., & Cistone, P. J. The politics of education. Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Press, 1974, p. 20.

The authors reporting on the concept of support indicated that the most commonly used measure of citizen interest in education is school elections. These elections may involve school board candidates, bonds, or referenda on particular issues. The significance of this support is illustrated by the funding level voters approve to finance educational programs.

The definition of support was drawn from the literature and research cited. Support as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a goal that provides for the economic and political resources by various subpublics in the school community sufficient to achieve the primary mission of the school as an institution.

Achievement. Achievement is a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Mann indicated that educational achievement is widely regarded as the most important goal of an educational institution. "Students' educational achievement comes close to being the reason for the school's existence."[24]

Downey reported, "A surprising amount of agreement was found among educators and laymen in their perceptions of the task of the school. The intellectual task tended to be given first priority by all groups."[25]

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[24] Mann, D. The politics of administrative representation, pp. 68-77.

[25] Downey, L. W. The task of public education. Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago, 1960.

Bailey stated, "The educational system might be defined as that combination of social institutions and facilities that are presumed to have as major purposes the discovery and inculcation of knowledge and values and the development of human skills and options."[26]

Bailey added:

> Surely, one major social justification for formal schooling is its training of the young in those basic skills of language and computation essential to gainful employment and other purposive activity. Those who emphasize mastery of the basic skills as the major instrumental purpose of education rest their case on the essentiality of the three Rs in virtually all aspects and functions of human life, most especially in earning a living.[27]

Hence most authors agree that educators and lay persons view student achievement as one of the fundamental purposes of schools.

The definition of achievement was drawn from the literature and research cited. Achievement as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a goal which provides for optimal student performance in cognitive learning and the basic skills.

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[26] Bailey, S. The purposes of education. Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1976, p. 2.

[27] Ibid., pp. 52-53.

Child growth and development. Child growth and development is a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Tyack stated in discussing the implications of the Brown Supreme Court Decision:

> In the Brown case the Court affirmed belief in the central "importance of education to our democratic society" as "the very foundation of good citizenship." Indeed, it was because the school was so crucial that segregation on the basis of race denied black children "the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment." "Today," said the Court, schooling "is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education."[28]

John Dewey wrote: Since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself. The criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it

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[28] Tyack, D. B. The one best system. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 279.

creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact.[29]

The definition of child growth and development was drawn from the literature. Child growth and development as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a goal which provides for optimal physical, social, and emotional maturity of pupils.

Processes

The processes of home-school-community relations expressed in the model include analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution. Access, which is displayed as a goal in the model, will also be discussed as a process in this section of the chapter.

Analysis. Analysis is a process displayed in the home-school-community relations model.

Brown[30] and Norton[31] suggested the systems approach as a useful tool in analyzing the political life of a school system as well as describing the political realities of educational reform in the

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[29] Dewey, J. John Dewey: Dictionary of education. R. B. Winn (Ed.). New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1959, pp. 50-51.

[30] Brown, W. B. Systems, boundaries and information flow. Academy of Management Journal, December 1966, p. 9.

[31] Norton, M. S. School-community realtions: New issues, new deeds. Clearing House, May 1970, p. 44.

schools. Scribner[32] summarized the political systems approach as containing five major variables: (a) the social and physical characteristics of the environment, (b) the political input characteristics, (c) the internal characteristics of the authoritative decision-making agency, (d) political system output characteristics, and (e) the environmental response characteristics with consideration for their interrelationships. According to Scribner, the systems approach is needed to assure a concentrated and comprehensive application of all school and community resources to the implementation of an effectively planned program of school-community relations.

In a study which reviewed four school-community relationship surveys in urban settings, Nystrand[33] attempted to determine (a) how the local school-community interacted and communicated with the community, (b) how effective they were, (c) how the local school-community became knowledgeable about local school-community issues, and (d) how they cultivated public receptivity to survey recommendations. The methods employed were sample surveys, case study techniques, content analysis of school board minutes and other documents, interviews with local influentials, and community meetings.

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[32] Scribner, J. D. The politics of educational reform: Analysis of political demand. Urban Education, 1970, 4, 4.

[33] Nystrand, R. O. The study of school-community relationships in urban settings: A discussion of the methods employed in the Cincinnait, Columbus, Detroit, and Washington, D.C. school surveys. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the AERA, Los Angeles, February 5-8, 1969.

He concluded that a research framework for analyzing home-school-community relations needed to be developed.

Kindred, Bagin, and Gallagher presented the following 11 steps for collecting information that will help planners to understand the community where programs operate:

Pertinent data about the community should reveal:

1. existing needs and expectations of citizens regarding public education;
2. opportunities and means for effecting better cooperative relations with various publics;
3. the nature of the power structure and the areas of decision making;
4. immediate and long-term problems that need attention;
5. gaps that should be filled in order to produce more public understanding of educational policies and programs;
6. situations to be avoided due to a past history of conflict;
7. an identification of those individuals and groups who are friendly or unfriendly toward public education;
8. changes that are occurring in patterns of community life;

9. the channels through which public opinion is built in the community;
10. leadership and leadership influences; and
11. the number and types of organizations and social agencies existing in the community.[34]

These authors have discussed analysis in terms of what it is, and not in terms of how it can be measured.

The definition of analysis was drawn from the literature and research cited. Analysis as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a process by which issues and subpublics are identified and related.

Communication. Communication is a process displayed in the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Chaffee stated:

> Mass communication provides an impersonal mode of citizen contact with schools that may help transcend social barriers. Those who do not participate in school-connected groups, find the mass media at least a partial substitute. If there is one clear deficiency in media coverage of education, as the public sees it, it is in the feedback to schools of information about the public. The press might well consider giving more

[34] Kindred, L. A., Bagin, D., & Gallagher, D. R. The school and community relations. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976, p. 35.

> attention to this feedback function, perhaps equal to its present level of coverage of schools.[35]

Chaffee and Ward indicated that:

> Communication between citizens and schools is the key to effective school-community relations. While the absence of communication may maintain quiescence for long periods, adequate channels are needed when controversy erupts. Selective patterns of communication are required to maintain support through low voter turnout. Understanding as a process of support is a direct product of open communication.[36]

A 1964 nationwide survey assessed the comparative usefulness and fairness of the major formal channels, by asking the public to rate each of these as to their helpfulness in school-citizen communications. Reporting on this survey Carter and Chaffee stated:

> The newspaper was the single channel most often cited as "helpful" to the public, for both dissemination and feedback. But it, like the other mass media, is primarily a one-way medium of dissemination. Radio and television were found to

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[35] Chaffee, S. H. The public view of the media as carriers of information between school and community. Journalism Quarterly, 44(4), Winter 1967, 734.

[36] Chaffee, S. H., & Ward, L. S. Channels of communication in school-community relations. Journalism Monographs, Published by the Association for Education in Journalism, September 1968, No. 8, 23.

be not nearly so useful for communication--in either direction.

Direct contact with teachers, and to a lesser extent administrators, was seen as the next most helpful channel for dissemination of school information to the public. However, this type of communication tends to be limited to parents of school children, and to the better educated citizens who can talk with school personnel roughly as "peers."

The formal organizations established presumably to foster communication--the parents organization and the school board--provide two-way channels. But neither is as helpful a channel as the newspaper or direct contact, and the school board is seen as a poorer source of dissemination than even the broadcast media.

Citizens' committees (including opposition groups) appeared to be a minor mechanism for communication. The mass media, on the other hand, are seen by the public as providing more neutral channels. The media are also somewhat less "selective," in that they are helpful sources of school information for citizens of less than average education, and those who have no children in school. In effect, the

> mass media, which are not specifically designed to mediate between citizens and schools, are providing a substitute for channels that were intended to serve that purpose.
>
> The school board was considered less fair than other sources of information and school teachers were judged as the most fair source. People with unfavorable attitudes toward their schools tended to judge all sources low on fairness, probably because these sources tend to project a "pro-school" view. Those with more than average education were also more critical of the fairness of reports they received from all sources.[37]

Charters[38] asserted that person-to-person communication and influence is a potent force in school-community relations. However, Coleman[39] lays great stress on the harmful effects of word-of-mouth communication as a substitute for more formal communication, when conflict arises.

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[37] Carter, R. F., & Chaffee, S. H. Between citizens and schools. Stanford: Stanford University Institute for Communication Research, 1966.

[38] Charters, W. W., Jr. Public relations. In C. W. Harris (Ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Researach (3rd ed.). New York: The Macmillan Co., 1960, pp.1075-81.

[39] Coleman, J. S. Community conflict. New York: The Free Press, 1957, pp. 13-14.

Carter, Greenberg, and Haimson drew several conclusions from a study that focused on informal communication. They concluded that:

> First, the conversations are casual, they do not focus on specific interests, and they have little effect on opinions. Second, they tend to be divorced from the formal processes of decision. Personal interests of the conversants (especially those who initiate the conversations) determine what will be talked about; specific policy considerations have little to do with it. Finally, there is not much "form" to the content of the conversations. Rather, there is a "crossfire of opinions and information," with little formal discussion of a particular issue.[40]

Atkinson stated, "Productive school-community relations emerge only when communication promotes mutual understanding and common action." He formulated six guidelines for school administrators to follow in planning from the communications process. The guidelines include:

1. exploring the feelings, motives, aspirations, and concerns of the people;
2. communicating with many individuals;

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[40] Carter, R. F., Greenberg, B. S., & Haimson, A. Informal communication about schools. Stanford: Stanford University Institute For Communication Research, 1966.

3. influencing the thinking of key individuals through a continuous flow of information which will help people to perceive education in a useful context and to see the need for moral and financial support;
4. utilizing diverse communication media in order to reach all of the intended audience;
5. realizing that the acceptance of communication depends on the receiver's perceptions of the sender and the kind of action proposed; and
6. remembering that the outcome of communication can be measured by the feedback which is obtained.

Atkinson suggested:

> While it is essential to tell the public about the schools, it is also incumbent on educators to listen to the public's response to information and, after serious examination, to use the feedback to improve future communication.[41]

These authors indicated that a two-way flow of communication between the school and the community is most effective. The mass

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[41] Atkinson, K. W. Communication: Closing the widening gap. Clearing House, September 1971, 46, 27-30.

media can be effective as a communication link between schools and nonparent members of the community. Many forms of communication with the school's subpublics should be employed. Informal communication does not seem to be as effective as more formalized forms of communication.

The definition of communication was drawn from the literature. Communication as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a process which utilizes many forms of interaction among various subpublics and between the school and the subpublics.

Involvement. Involvement is a process of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. In much of the literature the words involvement and participation are used interchangeably. However, the Home-School-Community Relations Model views involvement as parents' contribution of time, skill, and expertise to the school. Participation is seen as the part that parents play in helping to make decisions at the school.

Chaffee and Ward reported on direct involvement by parents in school affairs from a national survey conducted in 1964. They stated:

> Schools often hold events that invite citizen attendance and participation [involvement]. About two citizens in five report taking part in such events. This participation is divided about equally between those who attend as observers of student performances (recitals, plays, sports),

and those who attend adult functions such as PTA, fund-raising meetings and adult classes. Parents of school-age children are much more likely than other citizens to participate in these ways. Among those whose children are out of school or still too young for school, less than one in five participates.

In most families, the wife is regarded as the appropriate spouse to take an interest in school activities. Interest in school financial matters is more evenly divided between husband and wife. In general, the more favorable the attitude toward schools, and the less taxes are seen as a burden, the more participation in school events is found. (Causation here might run either way; participants become favorable to schools and don't grumble about taxes; those who like schools and feel little tax burdens are mostly parents, who paricipate a lot.) More educated citizens are much more likely to participate directly in school affairs, just as they are more likely to vote or talk about schools.

> College-trained people are twice as likely to attend an event at school, and three times as likely to talk with school personnel.[42]

Mann reported:

> The act of involvement requires the expenditures of some minimum amount of resources--time, concentration, intellectual and emotional expression. Investing personal resources is likely to increase one's commitment to the group being participated in, regardless of the outcome of any particular decision, simply because most people are loath to invest resources without receiving some benefits in return. If they do make the effort to participate and nothing happens, then their effort was wasted. Thus people tend to reinterpret unfavorable decisions as favorable or at least neutral rather than acknowledge the unpleasant outcomes of their own involvement. As involvement increases, so does support for the institution that was, after all, "good enough" to have made use of the involved person.[43]

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[42] Chaffee, S. H., & Ward, L. S. Channels of communication, p. 40.

[43] Mann, D. Politics of administrative representation, p.72.

Conant spoke of the value of community involvement in the schools:

> The profits can be enormous. Parents discussing and constructing curriculum materials under professional guidance learn about what the school is teaching and why. Parents working in the classroom as aides under the teacher's direction learn at first hand and by good example how different children are and how one can respond to their differences.[44]

Boutwell[45] suggested that the trend toward educators' loss of credibility with the public could be dealt with in a number of ways, including: finding ways of identifying and serving the parents of preschool children by helping these parents become good teacher-tutors, expanding the use of paraprofessionals, and encouraging parents to volunteer to help both at home and in the school.

The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)[46] saw many of the same advantages to citizen involvement, particularly when an educational innovation is being adopted. The association

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[44] Conant, M. M. Teachers and parents: Changing roles and goals. Childhood Education, December 1971, 48, 116.

[45] Boutwell, W. D. Achieving effective communication. Educational Digest, September 1971, 36, 20-22.

[46] National School Public Relations Association. Public Relations Gold Mine (Vol. 10). Washington, D.C.: Author, 1968, p.51.

suggested that the only way to motivate people to support the educational system and educational innovations is by directly involving them in it, "either in planning, implementing, or intensive visitation opportunities."

Murray[47] summarized the role of volunteers as (a) in-class helper, (b) corrector, (c) library, media-center, and learning laboratory aide, (d) classroom guest speaker, (e) clerical helper, (f) club advisor, (g) room mothers, (h) field trip chaperones, (i) contributor to social and fund raising events, and (j) parent advisory council member.

Carter and Dapper stated that the roles of the volunteers today were "directly involved in the very process of education itself--as visiting lecturers, kindergarten assistants, story tellers, readers of English themes, and, most of all, as tutors."[48]

Kindred[49] suggested that a local, voluntary parent-teacher association is one of the best means available for achieving the partnership concept. Osborne[50] pointed out, parent-teacher

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[47] Murray, A. Parent power in the schools. Chelmsford, Massachusetts: The Merrimack Education Center, 1974.

[48] Carter, B., & Dapper, G. School volunteers: What they do and how they do it. New York: Citation Press, 1972.

[49] Kindred, L. W. School public relations.

[50] Osborne, E. The parent-teacher partnership. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959.

associations exist to provide an opportunity for members to work together harmoniously for the benefit of the child. Knezevich[51] viewed the parent-teacher association as a public leadership agency which is concerned with developing closer relations between home and school, parents and teachers, so that they may cooperate intelligently in the child's education.

These authors indicated that involvement of parents in school activities is very important. Normal avenues for this involvement included attending school programs, membership in PTA and other parent organizations, volunteering to help at the school, and contributing time and resources to promote school activities.

The definition of involvement was drawn from the literature and research cited. Involvement as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a process through which various subpublics contribute resources of time, energy, and expertise to a school.

Participation. Participation is also a process of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Mann stated:

> A person who places a high value on himself is more likely to believe that an institution will be

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[51]Knezevich, S. J. Administration of public education.

responsive to his input and is thus more likely to make such input. When the institution does respond, or even seems to respond, the person's estimate of both his own worth and of the institution's is reinforced, making further input even more likely. The cycle of self-efficacy contributing to political efficacy contributing to self-efficacy and so on is probably more common, more powerful, and more socially significant in the direction of negative reinforcement than it is in the positive direction.[52]

There is a basic difference between community involvement as public relations and as shared control. Community involvement is successful when it is significant. The benefits to be derived are related to the opportunities offered; important opportunities will be rewarded by goal achievement. It should come as no surprise that what you get depends on what you invest.[53]

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[52] Mann, D. Politics of administrative representation, p. 72.

[53] Ibid., p. 102.

Mann stated further:

> Community involvement may also be developed without a precipitating event. It can be a response to a government mandate, or it can be planned and initiated by educators or other concerned people. However, when it is initiated by professionals, especially by professionals who do not live in the neighborhood, then it is extremely important that neighborhood residents be encouraged to participate as soon as possible. Without that early participation, relevant information is greatly reduced and so is the crucial identification of the community with the involvement mechanism. An involvement mechanism can come into being as a logical extension of an existing group. Advisory groups or parents' associations have sometimes provided a successful foundation for more authoritative involvement. The advantages of building on these groups is the ready availability of experienced people. On the other hand, because the purposes and requirements of control sharing are different from those of more advice and traditional public relations, the features of the existing group (composition, topical focus, etc.) should be carefully

reviewed and modified as necessary according to the topics dealt with here.[54]

Milbrath has said of those people who habitually do not take part in public affairs, "Failure to participate contributed to...a sense of political impotence, and (the) lack of a sense of efficacy increases the probability that they will not participate.[55]

Riles distinguished a control-sharing arrangement from both weaker and stronger forms of community involvement.

1. As participation is conceived here, with its possible combination of advisory and policy making functions, there is no guarantee that community parents and residents would really have an effective role in the governance of programs in their local schools...
2. With partnership described here as a division of authority, there is a sharing of the decision-making power--either in an informal arrangement (e.g., a set of understandings worked out with the local school board and administration) or a formal agreement (e.g., a legal contract stipulating the precise division of authority and responsibility)...

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[54] Ibid., p. 137.

[55] Milbrath, L. W. Political participation: How and why people get involved in politics. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965, p. 58.

3. With control conceived here as full authority in fiscal, programmatic, and hiring matters, the community board or authority legally replaces the central school board. Within the limits of state laws and municipal regulations, including any other agencies with which it must deal (e.g., the teachers' union), the community can operate its school or subsystem making such changes as it deems necessary and can afford.[56]

Thompson commented:

> Widespread popular participation in school matters presents a dilemma for schoolmen. Like the American system of government generally, school districts profess the democratic commitment. School governments are predicated on the belief that popular control over the instruments of governance is the primary guarantee against the usurpation and abuse of power; furthermore, school governments should be receptive to demands from the constituency and will benefit from

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[56] Riles, W. C. The urban education task force report. New York: Praeger, 1970, pp. 269-272. Quoted in J. Hughes and A. O. Hughes Equal education: A new national strategy. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972, p. 118.

popular participation in the governmental process. A look at the behavior of people in the school political process raises some rather discomforting questions about the viability of this ideal. For one thing, there is a high positive relationship between participation and dissent on both referenda and board elections. Large turnouts on school issues often bring out the "politically alienated" in the community. In those districts in which participation is high, dissent is also likely to be high, and many people will vote against the school. Thus it might be said that high participation indicates a depression of the level of community consensus on school affairs. Similarly, in school districts where there is a high rate of demand-presentation before the board, there is less consensus about the operation of the schools. Under these conditions the board and administrators operate under more stress and with much more internal conflict.[57]

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[57] Thompson, J. T. Policymaking, p. 76.

Arnstein[58] described eight levels in her "ladder of citizen participation" as being: (a) citizen control, (b) delegated power, (c) partnership, (d) placation, (e) consultation, (f) informing, (g) therapy, and (h) manipulation.

Lahoda[59] suggested that school systems should inform the public about the schools through a planned program. The community should be made part of the school family and together determine the goals and problems of education and take appropriate action. It was further stated that this involvement program should be genuine; nongenuine engagement of the community can be a dangerous undertaking.

Gittell explained, "No aspect of decision making should be totally isolated from consumer or citizen inputs and accountability. Any process which excludes participation of the people who are the recipients of the service and have a direct interest in policy decisions must end up lacking in responsiveness to needs."[60]

Kindred[61] related the value of citizen participation, mainly through advisory councils, as contributing to educational quality.

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[58] Arnstein, S. R. Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation. In E. S. Cahn and B. A. Passett (Eds.), Citizen participation: Effecting community change. New York: Praeger, 1971.

[59] Lahoda, G. Bringing the citizen's voice into board decisions. Education Canada, December 1971, p.11.

[60] Gittell, M. Community participation in education. A paper prepared for the Teacher Corps Associates, November 1974, p. 2.

[61] Kindred, L. W. School public relations, p. 147.

These panels, while not always satisfactory, have demonstrated nevertheless that laymen have a significant contribution to make to the advancement of education.

Cahn and Cahn[62] suggested that democracy is affirmed and alienation is eliminated when citizens have an opportunity to become participants in the educational system.

Home-school-community relations is viewed by these authors as parent participation directed toward attaining common goals for their children's education through increasing parental contact with the school by advocating a partnership between parents and school.

These writers assume that parents' participation in school affairs will cause their educational expectations for their children to be more similar to those held by school personnel.

The definition of participation, like that of involvement, etc., was drawn from the literature and research cited. Participation as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a process which provides entree to the decision- and policy-making processes of a school.

Resolution. Resolution is a process of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. Minar suggested that the isolation of

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[62] Cahn, E. S., & Cahn, J. C. Maximum feasible participation: A general overview. In E. S. Cahn & B. A. Passett (Eds.), Citizen participation: Effecting community change. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971, p. 16.

education from other municipal functions also meant that conflict and opposition could be easily mobilized against the lonely target of the educator rather than dispersed among numerous others.

> The consequence of this situation is not only that demands are focused on specifics...but also that the authority system usually is not accustomed to being opposed and therefore lacks resilience. Conflict is likely to be a disorganizing shock. Whereas, in most democratic governments, structured conflict is recognized as the way the game is played, in school government it often seems to be regarded as a rude and foreign intrusion.[63]

Zeigler reported:

> School systems are not equipped to deal with conflict, and therefore, respond to escalated demands defensively. Defensive reactions anger those who made the original demands, and thus conflict--normal in any well functioning system--becomes a cause celebre. The constant brouhaha about schools should not mask the relatively routine nature of most educational decisions. City councils

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[63] Minar, D. Community politics and school boards. The American School Board Journal, March 1967, 35.

> and legislatures deal with equally intense conflicts in the normal course of doing business. In contrast, school systems do not contain personnel emotionally or intellectually capable of handling conflict.[64]

Cunningham stated:

> Inability to deal with discontent has caused school people to withdraw, to isolate themselves from their constituencies (even their students), and to communicate an intensely defensive posture. The tragic part of this phenomenon is that no one really wills that it be this way. Such institutional withdrawal and protectionist behavior is simply the natural response of an organism that has failed to locate an adequate coping capacity.[65]

Gittell said:

> Some conflicts may well be healthy and in themselves, may activate new elements in the community. If the goal is greater participation and citizen interest, conflict may be a necessary component. Such clashes

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[64] Zeigler, H. Creating responsive schools. Urban Review, 1973, 6(4), 41.

[65] Cunningham, L. Governing schools: New approaches to old issues. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Press, 1971, p.177.

should not be viewed as necessarily negative in their impact. They must be evaluated in terms of the goals set or the model of political relations considered most productive to developing responsive policies.[66]

Austin indicated that conflict can stabilize the gains from social programs:

> The political and social movements among black citizens that were strengthened through adversary patterns of participation were able to maintain those gains and move forward on an independent basis.[67]

Bloomberg and Kincaid concluded:

> Extensive efforts to optimize the understanding and operational skills of activist parents and to educate and train a majority of teachers and administrators to react positively to the new situation could minimize the disruptive consequences

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[66] Gittell, M. Urban school reform in the 70's. In M. R. Berube & M. Gittell (Eds.), Confrontation at Ocean-Hill Brownsville. New York: Praeger, 1969, p. 332.

[67] Austin, D. Resident participation: Political mobilization or organizational cooperation? Public Administration Review, September 1971, 419.

of such movements and projects and maximize their contributions to changes that enhance the educational opportunities and experiences of ghetto children.[68]

Mann stated:

Conflict is not a sign of failure. The absence of unanimity does not mean something is wrong. Where interests differ and resources are limited, citizens should understand their differences, agree to a resolution of them, but not abandon the pursuit of their own interests. The informed consent of the neighborhood is as honorable a goal as consensus and, quite often, more realistic. There are different kinds of conflict. Some conflict accurately registers what people want the school to do. It signals the school about the different interests it must try to serve and provides valuable and constructive guidance. Then there is destructive or rancorous conflict in which people pursue their differences to the point that they are no longer willing to work together to solve common problems.

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[68] Bloomberg, W. J., & Kincaid, J. Parent participation: Practical policy or another panacea. The Urban Review, June 1968, 2(7), 11.

That willingness to work together is the definition of "community," and it can be destroyed by uncontrolled conflict. There has been much less rancorous conflict in schools than the media's attention to newsworthy events might indicate. There are very few places where communities wish to replace professionals in operating the schools. Nonetheless, principals are right to be concerned about the possibility of uncontrolled conflict. Where it has destroyed communities (and careers and the teaching/learning environment), it has done so for two reasons that are directly relevant to this manual. First, no effective mechanisms existed to channel and resolve the conflict. Second, the people involved (lay people and professionals) lacked the experience necessary to handle their disagreements.

If there is a minimal level of conflict in a neighborhood, then establishing an involvement mechanism may be relatively costless. If there is already substantial conflict, then the presence of the mechanism can only help with an already difficult situation. But what about conflicts that develop--and escalate--after the group's establishment?

What should the principal do about those? The answer is the same with or without a mechanism for community involvement. In large part, of course, it depends on the issue. The answer to the question "Who's right?" determines a great deal about the principal's response. But absent that information, the first reaction of most principals would be to mediate while staying relatively uninvolved. If mediation fails, if the stakes escalate, and if the principal joins in, then it is with the same risks as are always involved in conflict situations. When conflict is unavoidable, the principal's decision to become involved or not is a personal one. But the outcome of that conflict may depend on how carefully an involvement group was designed and supported by the principal.

The opposite side of the coin from visible conflict is neighborhood apathy. The political culture of some communities emphasizes respect for tradition and deference to authority. Such communities often appear to be very allegiant and quiet about educational matters until some grievance precipitates a change. Principals who work with these communities

> will need to build knowledgeable involvement prior to crises. Other communities are so alienated from their schools--and vice versa--that there is little if any involvement. A more common pattern is the situation in which the opportunities for involvement offered by the school to parents and other citizens are so trivial and so tangential that they do not elicit any significant response. Principals who use advisory committees to rubber-stamp decisions that have already been made, who consistently override advice, or who never ask parents about policy questions central to teaching and learning should not conclude that their neighborhoods are apathetic. It is much more likely that the citizens have made a reasonable response to an unrewarding opportunity.[69]

Goldstein and Cahill indicated:

> In the idealized state of nature, no continuing structure exists for the settlement of conflicts. Instead, the parties must resort to hand-to-hand combat. It is in order to avoid such costly conflict-resolution procedures, the application of

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[69] Mann, D. Politics of administrative representation, pp. 134-35.

> which may prove more adverse than having one's demands left unsatisfied, that such ad hoc procedures are usually discarded in favor of standing bodies of specialized actors who will settle conflict at less cost to those concerned. Even in those instances in which we do not refer directly to a permanent body of men organized for the sole purpose of resolving conflict ("the government"), we have come to accept as governmental any socially standardized form of settling conflict--e.g., the show of hands (majority rule) or the flip of a coin (unbiased chance affording equal opportunity)--which is almost automatically called into play even when the actors involved see no governmental agency as being relevant.[70]

Boss, Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson commented on the skills needed by successful superintendents of schools:

> Whether conflict is in fact dysfunctional is not important. So long as conflict is perceived as threatening, management of conflict is a

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[70] Goldstein, M. N., & Cahill, B. S. Mass media and community politics. In R. S. Cahill & S. P. Hencley (Eds.), The politics of education in the local community. Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1964, pp. 176-77.

particularly valuable skill. It may be that conflict management is one of the more legitimate claims to expertise on the part of superintendents.[71]

These authors added:

> We believe that the superintendent makes decisions in order to maximize a set of preferences based on his own values. It is in the interest of the superintendent, however, to minimize partisan response or community conflict regarding decision outcomes. All superintendents learn to live with some pressure and conflict, but all prefer to minimize them. The superintendent is thus constrained by the community (partially through interest groups) in making decisions and must further act to manage conflict that does arise.
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> We can specify three conditions that are necessary (and hence group activity) before decision-making conflict arises:
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> 1. Decision outcomes are incongruent with community preferences.
> 2. Community mobilizes attempt to influence or constrain decision making.

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[71] Boss, M. O., Zeigler, H., Tucker, H., & Wilson, L. A.,II. Professionalism, community structure, and decision-making school superintendents and interest groups. In S. K. Gove & F. M. Wirt (Eds.), Political science and school politics. Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath & Co., 1976, p. 42.

3. Superintendent management of attempted influence is unsuccessful.[72]

Banfield and Wilson explained, "Politics arises out of conflicts, and it consists of the activities--for example, reasonable discussion, impassioned oratory, balloting, and street fighting--by which conflict is carried on."[73]

Dye and Hawkins stated, "A fundamental source of conflict is human diversity. Differences among men in the way they make their living, in their income and educational levels, in the color of their skin, in the way they worship, in their style of living, and so on, are at the roots of political life."[74]

According to Jennings:

> Expressions of parental dissatisfaction or grievances directed against the schools are significant factors in producing changes within the system as well as a means of understanding the political relationship of parents to schools.

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[72] Ibid., p. 44.

[73] Banfield, E. C., & Wilson, J. Q. City politics. Boston: Harvard University Press and the M.I.T. Press, 1963, p. 7.

[74] Dye, T. R., & Hawkins, B. W. Politics in the metropolis: Conflict and cooperation. (T. R. Dye & B. W. Hawkins, Eds.). Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1967, p. 3.

> The type of grievance, the mode of expression, and the means of communication were the main focuses of his study. His findings show that the expression of parental grievances varies according to (1) the type of grievance (course content or events), (2) the social class of the parent expressing the grievance, and (3) the parent's degree of activism within the community or school.[75]

Froman commented:

> An underlying premise of all efforts to understand political processes is that politics arises out of the human situation. Man's physical needs and social wants constantly press against the scarcity of resources. Individuals have different wants and needs; and in the interaction with other people, the preferences of some individuals inevitably conflict with the preferences of others. Tensions frequently arise between men of differing preferences, particularly when insufficient resources exist to satisfy the wishes of everyone. Choices have to be made

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[75] Jennings, M. K. Parental grievances and school politics. Public Opinion Quarterly, Fall 1968, 364.

between competing demands. This is the source of social conflict--the seedbed of politics.[76]

Bailey stated:

> Beyond rhetoric, the negotiating skill also involves both the subtleties and psychic resiliencies associated with the ability to resolve or defuse conflicts--to talk people down from their "highs" of anger and mistrust. Negotiating also involves the most essential of all political talents: the capacity to bargain; to discover areas of agreement; in the non-pejorative sense, to deal.[77]

March and Simon[78] identified three main classes of conflict: (a) individual conflict in the course of the decision-making process; (b) conflict between individuals and/or groups in an organization; and (c) conflict between groups and organizations.

Carter suggested:

> ...a principal is involved in politics each time an effort is made to obtain support for, appease the demands of, or communicate with an individual,

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[76] Froman, L. A., Jr. People and politics: An analysis of the American political system. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962, pp. 1-15.

[77] Bailey, S. Purposes of education, p. 93.

[78] March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. Organizations. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964.

> group or organization...the way to obtain aid for the schools and to improve the instructional program is political.[79]

Sestak and Frerich viewed the principal as the harmonizer between the school and the community:

> It is necessary for him to bring people together into closer relationships and greater harmony with the school. He must know what groups exist, what their interests are, and what possible contribution each group could make.[80]

These authors' findings point to the political aspects of school-community relations as being conceptualized in three dimensions: (a) the school's interaction with the political leadership of the local, state, and national government; (b) community participation in educational decision making; and (c) the politics between two political systems: the school system and the community.

Hence, resolution as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model is a process which is designed to solve problems and to reduce actual or potential conflict among the home, the school, and the community.

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[79] Carter, D. G. The principal in the socio-political system of the school. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1975, pp. 5-7.

[80] Sestak, M. E., & Frerich, D. D. The principal's role in school-community relations. Selected articles for elementary principals. Washington, D.C.: Department of Elementary Principals, N.E.A., 1968, p. 120.

Access

Access is a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model.[81] Iannaccone while discussing nonpartisan, at-large, elected, district-wide, boards of education stated:

> The structure of government was restructured in such a manner that access to decision-making centers was convenient only for individuals and interest groups inclined to support the reform ideology because of their social class outlook. The reform and its doctrines made school districts structurally and ideologically less vulnerable to the urban neighborhood based political machine...weakening of the attendance area community depressing the influence of neighborhood groups of parents reduced site level access and the possibility to express concern for micro politics, building level issues, of the activity linkages between school-pupil-home of teaching and learning.[82]

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[81] Access is a goal of the Home-School-Community Relations Model. However, access is discussed here as a process. One of the basic questions to be investigated in this study concerns the most appropriate placement of access in the model.

[82] Iannaccone, L. Access and legitimacy, p. 5.

Iannaccone further stated:

> A political revolution in education simultaneously challenges the established structure for access to decisions and the belief in the legitimacy both of who shall decide and what values shall function as the premises for decisions.[83]

Mann suggested:

> Common language definitions of representation usually run as follows: representation is, "acting for someone else," "doing something instead of someone else," "or acting on behalf of someone else." The shared thread is that of "representing," or making present again something that is not, in fact, available. Thus, someone acting as a political representative brings the wishes, interests, demands, and opinions of the constituents to the attention of decision-makers when those constituents are not themselves present. A good deal of the importance of representation comes from the fact that the constituents can virtually never be present themselves.[84]

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[83] Ibid, p. 6.

[84] Mann, D. Politics of administrative representation, p. 7.

Pitkin added:

> The representative must act independently; his action must involve discretion and judgment; he must be the one who acts. The represented must also be (conceived as) capable of independent action and judgment, not merely being taken care of. And, despite the resulting potential for conflict between representative and represented about what is to be done, that conflict must not normally take place. The representative must act in such a way that there is no conflict, or if it occurs an explanation is called for. He must not be found persistently at odds with the wishes of the represented without good reason in terms of their interest, without a good explanation of why their wishes are not in accord with their interest.[85]

These authors define access as the ability to have one's views, concerns, and opinions represented. One author stated that the at-large elections of school board members makes this more difficult for less affluent members of a community. The representative and the represented should have common understandings regarding their desires and interests. Conflict should be kept to a minimum.

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[85] Pitkin, H. F. The concept of representation. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1967, pp. 209-210.

The definition of access was drawn from the review of literature and research cited. Access as defined in the Home-School-Community Relations Model for this research is a process which assures that various community subpublics are able to have their interests represented in the school. Members of a community subpublic may represent themselves or may choose to have an advocate or advisor who serves as a trusted confidant represent them. This person may be a school staff member, such as a teacher or the principal, or any other member of the local school community.

Summary

"A Programmatic Model for Home-School-Community Relations" provides the basic conceptual framework for the study. The model suggests three major components of a home-school-community relations program:

1. A planned program of activities with stated objectives, specifically assigned staff roles and responsibilities, and a framework for evaluation that would be organized based upon a systematic needs assessment.

2. A set of processes which are operationalized through the program of activities. These processes are analysis, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution.

3. A set of anticipated goals that may be attained based upon the program and processes. The goals are access, legitimacy, support, achievement, and child growth and development.[86]

The process variables of communication, involvement, participation, and resolution plus the goal variable of access from the framework will be used in this study as variables to determine a measure of effective school-community relations. The process variable of analysis will not be used in this study because it deals with identifying issues and subpublics and how those issues and subpublics are related. The procedure of analysis is normally a function performed by school personnel.[87]

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Five research questions were developed to determine the relationship between school-community relations and student achievement. Parents' perceptions of effective school-community relations were obtained by administering a reliable and valid interview protocol to

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[86] Raskas, H. I. Patterns of citizen participation: Four schools of political thought. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, in progress.

[87] This study attempts to secure parental perceptions of effective school-community realtions; however, parents are not involved in the process of analysis, therefore they would have no experience in the internal subpublics' (school staff) use of analysis. Hence, parents were not asked to express their perceptions of analysis.

64 parents. The parents were asked to respond for themselves (personal) and for parents of the school more generally (global) to the questions contained in the interview protocol. The personal responses of parents were then related to the academic achievement measures of their children. Personal responses were considered as primary research questions, while global responses were considered ancillary considerations.

1. What are the relationships among the five variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution in effective school-community relations?

2. What is the relationship among the four variables of communication, involvement, participation, and resolution and the fifth variable of access?

3. What are the relationships (independently and in combination) among the five independent variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution and the overall parental perceptual measure of effective school-community relations?

4. What are the relationships (independently and in combination) among the five independent variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution and student achievement?

5. What is the relationship between effective school-community relations and student achievement, as determined by standardized achievement scores and grades?

In addition to the definitions of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution which were discussed

previously in this chapter, the definitions of the remaining concepts are as follows:

School-Community Relations: the outcome connoting reciprocal relations or interactions between home and school.

Grades: a mark (A,B,C,D, or U) indicating a degree of accomplishment in school.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this research was open-ended and focused on interviewing. The instrument used for interviewing was tested and found to be valid and reliable. (The processes utilized to validate the instrument and to secure reliability data on the instrument will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.) The data obtained from this instrument has been subjected to various statistical analyses including correlation and regression analyses. (A detailed description of the statistical procedures utilized in the study is presented later in this chapter.) Also, the field method of participant observation was used to gather background information and current data regarding the school-community relations program at the school investigated in this research. A case study of the school may be found in Chapter Three of this report.

The Field Study

This study may be described as a field study which focused on one particular case. The anthropological-sociological methods of

direct observation and participation were used; McCall and Simmons call this method participant observation. They described this approach as one which:

> involves some amount of genuinely social interaction in the field with the subjects of the study, some direct observation or relevant events, some formal and a great deal of informal interviewing, some systematic counting, some collection of documents and artifacts, and open-endedness in the directions the study takes.[88]

Here, the role of the researcher is described by Gold[89] as being on a behavioral continuum ranging from the complete participant to the complete observer.

A case study is defined by Sax as "any relatively detailed description and analysis of a single person, event, institution, or community."[90] The decision to use a case study approach within a field study design was prompted by the need for an in-depth analysis of current school-community relations practices in the school.

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[88] McCall, G. J., & Simmons, J. L. The nature of participant observation, p. 1.

[89] Gold, R. L. Roles in sociological field observations. Social Forces, March 1958, 36, 217-223.

[90] Sax, G. Empirical foundations of educational research. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968, p. 288.

Preliminary Planning

One basic criteria used for selecting the research site was that the school must be carrying out a wide variety of school-community-relations activities to provide some variance for measuring parental responses to interview questions.

A second consideration was the ability of the researcher to gain access to the school system and the individual school. Two school systems were examined. One district was eliminated due to difficulties encountered in gaining access.

The final process involved a decision by the staff of the Home-School-Community Relations Project to limit the study to one school. This decision was based on the circumstance that it appeared unfeasible in terms of time and money to attempt in-depth case studies in more than one school. The Nichols City School District[91] was selected as the district for study on the basis of the willingness of local school principals and staffs to cooperate with the research effort, and the researcher's familiarity with urban education programs in the district.

Gaining Access to the District and Locating Schools

Efforts to gain access to the Nichols City School District began in September 1977. The formal process was completed on January 13, 1978 when a letter of approval for the study was received by the

[91]Nichols City School District is a pseudonym for the school district in which this research study was conducted.

researcher.[92] (The letter appears in an Appendix.) During the intervening time it was necessary to provide a proposal outlining the research study and to make several follow-up phone calls to various district offices.

The researcher contacted the principals of four schools which met the stated criteria and solicited their participation in the study. Site visitations were arranged and a team of three researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison visited the four schools on October 11-12, 1977.

The Scouting Expedition

The scouting phase of a study is described by Katz as "the period of informal and relatively free investigation in which the field workers try to get as thorough an understanding of the important forces in the situation as they can."[93] The scouting phase of this study was planned to facilitate the selection of a school site, to familiarize the researcher with the social environment to be studied, and to informally explore the variables which might affect the proposed study. This was accomplished by a trip to Nichols City by the researcher, a graduate student, and one of the faculty associates of the Home-School-Community Relations Project to interview the principals, various staff members, and parents of the schools under consideration.

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[92] Verbal approval had been granted in October 1977.

[93] Katz, D. Field studies. In L. Festinger & D. Katz (Eds.), Research methods in the behavioral sciences. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1953, p. 67.

Interviews with other principals, staff members, and parents of the four schools were conducted on October 11-12, 1977. The interviews were structured so as to answer the following questions:

1. How well does the school meet the criteria listed earlier in this chapter?

2. What is the nature of the neighborhood and community in which the school is located?

3. What is the attitude of the principal toward research?

A discussion of the four schools follows.

Reed School. The operation of Reed School was highly centralized about the principal. The activities associated with home-school-community relations were somewhat limited. The neighborhood was populated generally with Blacks of lower income. The principal was less than thrilled with the prospect of having the school become involved in a research study.

Lloyd School. The general atmosphere at Lloyd School was at best bland. No great hostility was evidenced; however, no overwhelming satisfaction was apparent. The neighborhood was largely Black and residential. The school was somewhat overcrowded in terms of space. Many faculty members had been added to the staff the previous school year and the principal was beginning his second year at the school. The variety of activities was limited and only a few parents seemed to be active in the three parent organizations. The principal expressed a willingness to cooperate fully with the research effort.

Nash School. Nash School was located in an area of the city populated by lower income Blacks and Whites. Whites were moving out of the school area weekly as Blacks moved in. There seemed to be a general air of negativism at Nash School. Hostility between some staff members and a small group of parents was very clear. The racial issue seemed to be the root cause of some of this hostility. A wide variety of activities were carried on by the school and a small group of parents appeared dedicated to working for the betterment of the school and the neighborhood. The principal was most cooperative and expressed a desire to be involved in the research effort.

Truman School. Truman School was located near a low-rent housing project populated by low income Blacks. The principl, staff members, and parents expressed pride in their school. A wide variety of activities were carried on by the school. The principal expressed a willingness to cooperate with proposed research.

Selecting the School

Truman School was selected as the site for the proposed research. The reluctance of the principal at Reed School to take part in the study was the reason for its elimination from consideration. The staff turnover and a lack of activities at Lloyd School caused it to be dropped from consideration. The racial overtones at Nash School were viewed as a possible problem that might hinder the research effort.

Truman School met the criteria established for the research. The principal and the staff expressed an interest in taking part in the study. Many varied activities had become a part of the school's program. The pride expressed in the school by the principal, staff members, and parents was considered a positive factor which had not been anticipated.

Instrumentation

The focused interview protocol developed for this research consists of one overall perceptual question measuring parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of school-community relations and five specific perceptual questions. Each of the specific questions measures parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of one of the five variables of access, communication, involvement, participation, and resolution. Each of these questions was measured using a 5-point Likert type scale. The interview protocol also contains an open ended question for each of the five variables and items to serve as probes. The probes are constructed to elicit responses from the interviewee if voluntary responses prove to be lacking in depth. Parents were given a modified version of the Likert Scale which was used as a reference during the focused portion of the interview.

Validity

Content validity of the interview protocol was obtained by securing responses from a group of practitioners and parents. These

persons examined the interview protocol to determine its clarity, understandability, and appearance of measuring what was intended. The group of 33 practitioners and parents consisted of the following people:

1. One nationally recognized authority on school public relations problems; the Executive Director of the National School Public Relations Association.

2. One Professor of Education at Western Washington State College who has had experience in developing interview protocols previously.

3. Two Directors of Public Affairs for urban school districts whose work involved the construction of questionnaires and interview schedules. One person worked for the Cedar Rapids Community Schools and the other person worked for the St. Louis Public Schools.

4. Six Professors of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who have all been engaged in research that involved the construction of interview protocol instruments.

5. Eight staff members of an urban inner-city elementary school in St. Louis, Missouri. These people were selected because of their involvement in communicating with parents in a written form throughout a normal school year.

6. Six parents from an urban inner city elementary school in the northern part of St. Louis, Missouri. These parents were

selected because all of them have been involved in PTA activities and parent advisory committees that have had to send written information to other parents from time to time.

7. Nine parents from an urban inner-city elementary school in Nichols City near a large public housing complex. These parents were selected randomly. They were chosen because the population of parents to be interviewed for the study reside in a large public housing complex in another part of that city. It was thought that these parents would be similar in background, education, income, and occupational levels to the parents to be investigated in this proposed study.

Comments and suggestions were secured from the group of 33 practitioners and parents. Appropriate revisions were made in the interview protocol based on the comments, suggestions, and questions raised by the group of respondents. One major revision resulted from this process. One scholar suggested that a decision should be made concerning the responses desired from parents based on whether or not the researcher desired personal responses or general, global responses. It was decided to seek to obtain both responses and compare the two to determine if parents viewed school-community relations the same for themselves and for other parents.

Reliability

As Kerlinger stated:

...high reliability is no guarantee of good

> scientific results, but there can be no good scientific results without reliability.[94]

Hence, reliability for this research was determined by a test-retest technique. Correlation coefficients assessed the stability of the instrument.

More specifically, a group of 33 parents of elementary-aged children attending various schools in Madison, Wisconsin were administered the validated interview protocol. After a two-week period of time, the same parents were retested. The order in which the questions were asked at the initial interview was reversed to help eliminate the possibility of parents remembering their exact responses. At the conclusion of the interview, the parents were requested to indicate whether any unusual interaction between the school and them had occurred within the test-retest time period. None indicated any such events occurring. The correlations appear in Table 2-1. The lowest correlation obtained was .81 (communication) and the highest correlation obtained was .96 (access). Reviewing these results, this researcher concluded that all items appeared stable and therefore no further changes or revisions were made.

Population and Sample

The families of 64 students were randomly selected from those currently enrolled in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades at Truman

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[94] Kerlinger, F. N. Foundations of behavioral research (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

Table 2-1

Inter-Scale of Test-Retest Correlations*

(N = 33)

	RETEST				
TEST	Communication	Involvement	Participation	Resolution	Access
Communication	.81 (.001)				
Involvement	-.01 (.491)	.82 (.001)			
Participation	.31 (.039)	-.32 (.034)	.86 (.001)		
Resolution	.22 (.113)	-.17 (.167)	.48 (.002)	.90 (.001)	
Access	-.05 (.384)	.08 (.329)	.44 (.005)	.32 (.033)	.96 (.001)

*Entries on the diagonal represent test-retest correlation coefficients; those off the diagonal are zero-order correlation coefficients computed from the first administration of the interview procedure.

School. The criterion of four continuous years of school attendance was established to provide a continuity of instruction for the students and a continuity of interactions between the school and the home for the parents. Random sampling was employed to identify the 64 families to be investigated.

Student data including IQ scores, standardized achievement test scores, and letter grades in the areas of reading comprehension, language, and arithmetic were obtained from school records for students enrolled in grades four, five, and six. Data concerning 181 students were secured. Forty-four students were eliminated from the study for the following reasons:

1. Attending Truman School less than four years 30
2. Incomplete data
   (IQ, achievement and/or grades) 5
3. Combination of items 1 and 2 . . . . . $\frac{9}{44}$

Letters were mailed to 78 parents of the remaining 137 students explaining the research study and seeking their cooperation. Nine parents refused to take part in the research and five families had moved. The researcher contacted all of the remaining 64 parents by telephone to verify appointments. Fifty of the interviews were held at the school; 14 of the interviews were conducted at the homes of the parents.

Collection of Data

This section of the chapter focuses on the procedures followed in collecting the interview data, achievement scores, letter grades, and the attempt to provide anonymity.

Interview Data

Parents of 64 students (fourth, fifth, and sixth graders) were administered the interview protocol (see Appendix A). Background information concerning the parent and the student was gathered, and the interviewer introduced himself and provided the parent with information concerning the nature of the study and the confidentiality involved.

An open-ended question was asked concerning the first variable to be considered--communication. Substantive and procedural probes were utilized to elicit in-depth responses during the interview. Substantive probes were used to acquire specific responses. These probes were constructed to elicit factual information. For example, concerning the variable of communication, the substantive probes were used to determine if parents receive communication in the form of school news letters, notes, telephone calls, and report cards. Procedural probes were used to keep the interview moving and to go into greater detail. Procedural probes sought such information as whether the current situation had changed over time, drew examples from the parents' responses, and asked for suggestions that would lead to an improved situation. These responses (with and without probes) were recorded by the interviewer by taking notes directly on

the interview protocol. At the completion of this procedure, the parent respondents would rate communication on a 5-point Likert Scale. The Likert Scale was constructed to be analogous to the grading system used by the school for reporting student progress to the parent. As the parent responded, a modified version of the Likert Scale was provided (see Appendix B).

The same procedure was followed for the remaining four variables (involvement, participation, resolution, and access). Finally, an overall measure of the effectiveness of school-community relations was recorded in a similar manner. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. Within 24 hours, the interviewer reconstructed the interview and recorded all of the information obtained in narrative form.

Achievement Scores

The cumulative student records of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders were examined to acquire the most recent Iowa Test of Basic Skills (I.T.B.S.) scores for reading comprehension, language and mathematics. The cumulative I.T.B.S. scores were also recorded.

Letter Grades

The most recent report cards were examined to obtain the letter grades for reading, language, and mathematics which corresponded to the I.T.B.S. testing period. The letter grades were then converted to a numerical form with an A becoming a 5, a B becoming a 4, etc.

Ethics and Anonymity

The use of field methodology raised some ethical considerations in relationship to preserving the anonymity of respondents and interpreting their comments without distorting intended meanings. While it is likely that those who participated in the research will not remain unknown to each other, several efforts were made to produce a study which represents accurate reporting of research and still honors the trust placed in the researcher by those who cooperated in the study.

The names of all persons and places have been changed to protect the identity of the city, school district, school, and individuals who participated in the study. More specifically, when direct quotations were used, the pronoun indicating the sex of the individual was occasionally changed from the true pronoun. In many cases, no reference to sex is made. Finally, official documents containing the name of the school, the school district, the city, or the state were not cited as references in this study.

Statistical Analyses

Three statistical analyses techniques were performed on the data in this study. The computer program used to analyze the data was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The system provided a unified and comprehensive package that enabled the researcher to perform many different types of data analysis in a simple and convenient manner.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, which indicated the degree to which variation or change in one variable was related to variation or change in another variable, were used (a) to determine the relationships among the five variables in school-community relations (communication, involvement, participation, resolution, and access) and (b) to determine the relationship between effective school-community relations and student achievement.

Forward step-wise multiple regression analysis was utilized to examine three of the research questions. In this procedure the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance in the dependent variable was entered first; the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance in conjunction with the first was entered second, and so on. In other words, the variable that explained the greatest amount of variance unexplained by the variables already in the equation entered the equation at each step. One or more of the variables may never be entered into the regression equation if the statistical criteria were not met. This procedure was used (a) to determine the strength of the relationships among the four independent variables (communication, involvement, participation, and resolution) to the dependent variable of access; (b) to determine the strength of the relationships among the five independent variables and the dependent variable of effective school-community relations; and (c) to determine the strength of the relationships among the five independent variables and the dependent variable of student achievement.

Path Analysis[95] was then utilized to determine whether the concept of resolution might be an intervening variable that mediated the affects of the independent variables (communication, involvement, participation, and access) on the dependent variable, student achievement.

In order for the procedure to be validly applied, the researcher made explicit both the theoretical formulations of causal relationships within the program and any associated assumptions. Path Analysis then provided a means of empirically testing the tenability and consistency of the assumed relationships. It forced a sharpening and testing of both the logical and empirical basis underlying programmatic causal claims.

Path Analysis can be characterized as:

1. relating primarily to the analysis of nonexperimental data and the absence of laboratory or experimental controls;

2. employing hypothetical constructs to specify presumed but latent variables which, though not always directly observed, are implied in the relationships with the observable variables; and

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[95] Preliminary analysis of the data collected indicated that resolution might be an important variable and predicted a large amount of the variance explained of student achievement. Bartels suggested that resolution might serve as a process and an outcome in the model of Home-School-Community Relations. Therefore, plausible causal linkages were postulated among the variables with resolution serving as an intervening variable, and a secondary analysis of the data was performed.

3. utilizing a systems orientation reflected in the use of sets of interacting relational equations.[96]

Path Analysis involves the construction of explicitly formulated alternative structural (causal) models which imply different patterns of relationships among variables. Path Analysis makes the underlying causal reasoning explicit in the form of path diagrams and structural equations. Regression analysis is then used to construct "path coefficients" (beta weights). Models inconsistent with the data are rejected, while those not rejected are viewed as plausible causal patterns to be further studied. Causation cannot be unambiguously demonstrated using these techniques, but some causal patterns can be rendered more believable than others.

The following assumptions are made in the use of Path Analysis. These assumptions have to be met to obtain valid results from an application of the technique.

1. A clearly defined, explictly specified causal system which includes all relevant variables is assumed.

2. The form of the model must be correctly specified with variables ordered correctly from the point of view of both theory and measurement procedures.

3. Within the structural model a change in one variable is always a linear function of changes in other variables.

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[96] Goldberger, A. S., & Duncan, O. D. (Eds). Structural equation models in the social sciences. New York: Seminar Press, 1973.

4. Dependent variables are assumed to be uncorrelated with each other.

5. Hypothetical, unmeasured variables are assumed to be continuous.

6. Measurements are assumed to have a high degree of reliability and validity (low measurement error).

7. The data must meet all multivariate regression assumptions including

- interval scale measurement,
- homoscedasticity,
- relatively low intercorrelations among causal variables predictors,
- linear and additive effects among variables,
- residuals are uncorrelated with a mean of zero and unit variance,
- fixed effects independent variables.[97]

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited by a number of factors. The perceptions of the respondents may not accurately reflect the school's school-community relations programs, processes, and activities. This study will be open to the question of generalizability, in that not all

[97] Smith, N. L., & Murray, S. L. The use of path analysis in program evaluation. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, April 1977, pp. 5-6.

urban inner city schools are the same, and a single school was the focus of this research. It was not possible to determine what events caused the school-community relations program at the school to be the way it appeared. Also, there is the possibility that some unique incident(s) may have caused a sharp change in the respondents' perceptions of school-community relations.

CHAPTER III

TRUMAN SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

Truman School was situated in Nichols City, a large industrial city located in a border state. The Nichols City metropolitan area contained over one million people. The city was bounded by a large river to the east and by suburban communities to the north, south, and west. Therefore, the city was not in a position to expand beyond its established boundaries. The city and the school district shared the same boundaries.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Nichols City had been experiencing not only a decline in population, but a dramatic shift in the racial composition of that population. In the 20 years between 1950 and 1970, Nichols City lost more than 190,000 residents (from approximately 850,000 to 660,000). However, those gross figures did not indicate the great change in the racial background of the residents during that time, for the White population had dropped from 702,000 to 376,000, while the Black population had risen from 154,000 to 291,000. Whites left the city during those two decades at the rate of 16,300 per year, while the Blacks moved in at the rate of 6,850 per year. At the time this study was conducted, the percentage of Black students in the public schools was 72% and the percentage of White students enrolled was 28%. More specifically, there were approximately

58,000 Black students and 22,000 White students. Of the 58,000 Black students, over 30,000 came from homes supported by the public welfare program of Aid to Dependent Children (A.D.C.).

The Nichols City school system was fiscally independent of both the city and state government which meant that voters directly approved or disapproved tax issues regarding finances for the school system. The system was governed by a 12-member Board of Education elected at-large for terms of six years.

The Board also operated politically independent of City Hall. Although the mayor had legal authority to make interim appointments to fill school board vacancies and to appoint independent auditors for the school system, neither of those powers had given the mayor much of a role in the school system. The mayor exercised no special political role in dealing with the governor or the state legislature on school matters in as much as such contacts were made directly by board members, their lobbyists, and/or the superintendent. Although the mayor's endorsement along with other endorsements by community leaders was sought in support of the tax elections, such endorsements were generally freely given.

The center of educational decision-making was the Board of Education. It was within this body that all major educational policy decisions were made and where any changes in the system originated. Major administrative posts in the school system were filled by appointees of the Board. The major appointee of the

Board was the Superintendent of Schools who functioned as the general manager for the school system.

The Nichols City School System had a 12-member Board of Education (See Figure 3-1). The Superintendent of Schools was assisted by a Deputy Superintendent and four associate superintendents. The school system originally consisted of six districts but was then divided into five districts.[1] Each district was supervised by a district superintendent and a distric assistant.

Until 1967, district superintendents were responsible only for kindergarten through eighth-grade. However, the responsibility had been expanded to include the high school grades as well.[2] Two high schools were located in each district and the number of elementary schools per district varied from 23 to 31. High school and elementary principals reported directly to their area district superintendent, while Magnet School principals reported directly to the director of that program. The number of teachers assigned to a district was based on the number of children located in that district. Supportive staff was assigned in a similar fashion so that each district received its share of music, art, physical education,

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[1]The term "school system" or "system" refers to the total school district. The term "district" refers to the five subdistricts. Those terms were commonly used as indicated in Nichols City.

[2]Ray C. Rist, The Urban School: A Factory of Failure A Study of Education in American Society (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1973), p. 29.

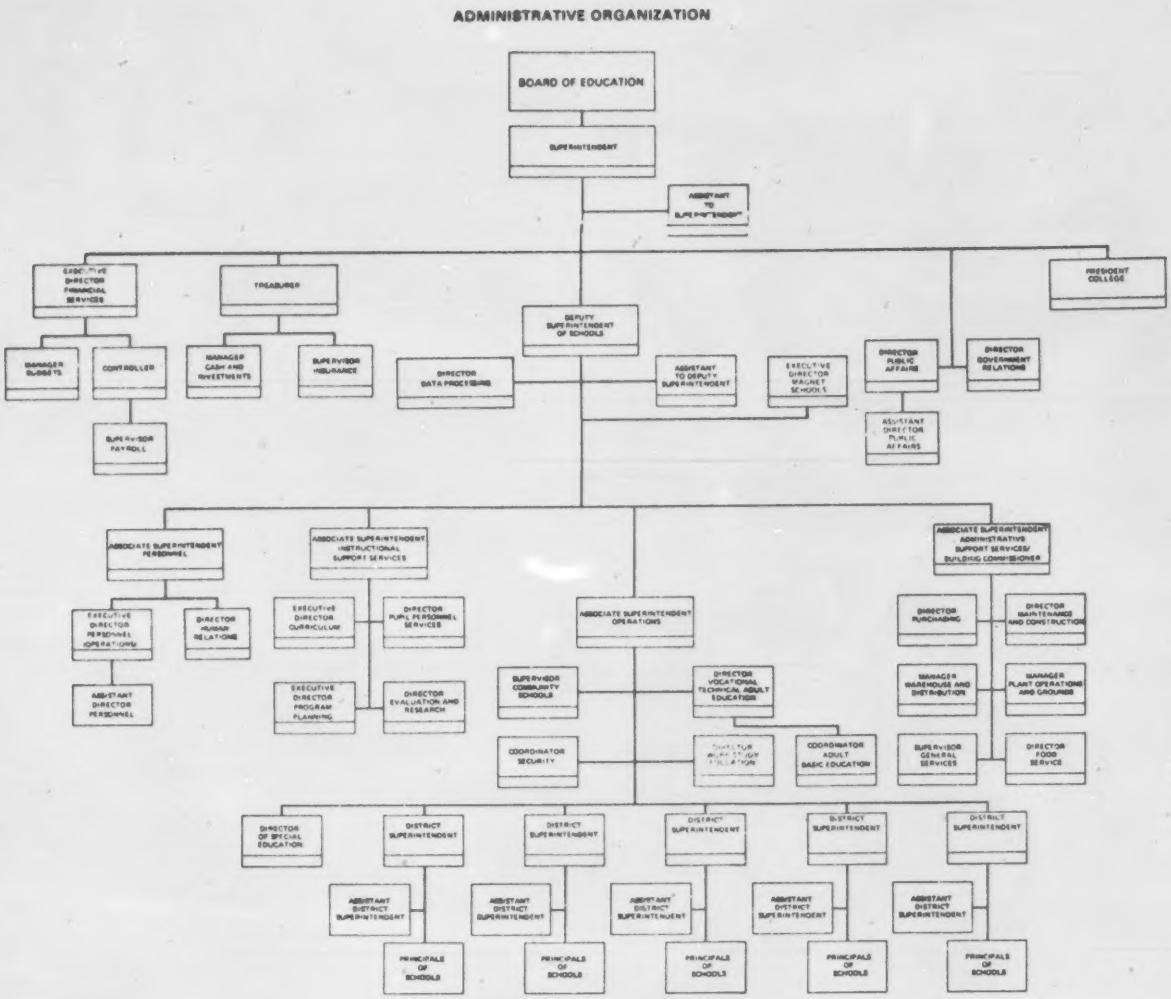
ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUPERINTENDENT
ASSISTANT TO SUPERINTENDENT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FINANCIAL SERVICES
TREASURER
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
PRESIDENT COLLEGE
MANAGER BUDGETS
CONTROLLER
MANAGER CASH AND INVESTMENTS
SUPERVISOR INSURANCE
DIRECTOR DATA PROCESSING
ASSISTANT TO DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAGNET SCHOOLS
DIRECTOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
SUPERVISOR PAYROLL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT PERSONNEL
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES/ BUILDING COMMISSIONER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PERSONNEL OPERATIONS
DIRECTOR HUMAN RELATIONS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CURRICULUM
DIRECTOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT OPERATIONS
DIRECTOR PURCHASING
DIRECTOR MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PERSONNEL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROGRAM PLANNING
DIRECTOR EVALUATION AND RESEARCH
SUPERVISOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
DIRECTOR VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL ADULT EDUCATION
MANAGER WAREHOUSE AND DISTRIBUTION
MANAGER PLANT OPERATIONS AND GROUNDS
COORDINATOR SECURITY
COORDINATOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
SUPERVISOR GENERAL SERVICES
DIRECTOR FOOD SERVICE
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
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Figure 3-1.

and speech teachers. Teachers seldom crossed district lines except for some supportive personnel.

There were 166 schools in the Nichols City School System. (See Table 3-1.) The student enrollment for the school system totaled 78,852 as of September 1977. (See Table 3-2.) The Nichols City School System employed 6,862 people with federal funds paying the salaries of 1,027 of the employees and regular funds secured from local property taxes and state aid paying the salaries of the remaining 5,835 employees. (See Table 3-3.) The total budget for the school system was $111,348,803.86.[3]

Nichols City was involved in a transfer policy of personnel that sought to have at least 30% minority staff members (certificated and noncertificated) in each school. For example, if a school had a Black student population of over 50% making Whites the "minority race" in this case, then at least 30% of the staff members were to be White. This "staff balancing" transfer policy was to be fully implemented by the beginning of the 1978/79 school year.

In addition to the staff balance program involving the transferring of personnel, the Nichols City Public Schools was facing a major legal battle. A group of Black parents was suing the Board of Education claiming that the Board had deliberately used the neighborhood school concept to foster segregation. Nichols City

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[3]Information taken from "Facts for 1977-78." Published by the Nichols City Public Schools.

Table 3-1

Schools in the Nichols City School District

Types of Schools	Number of Schools
Elementary Schools/Branches	124
Middle/Junior High	6
High Schools/Branches	21
Technical Center	1
Teachers College	1
Special Education Schools	8
Hospital Schools	5
Total	166

Table 3-2

Enrollment for the Nichols City School District

Level of Schools	Number of Students
Elementary	48,893
Secondary	23,471
Kindergarten	5,388
Teachers College	1,100
Total	78,852

Table 3-3

Personnel of the Nichols City School District

Type of Personnel	Number of Personnel
Regular	
Teachers	3,715
Administrators	355
Teacher Aides	158
Nonteaching	1,607
Federal	
Teachers	501
Administrators	53
Teacher Aides	185
Nonteaching	288
Total	6,862

was under a consent decree issued by the presiding judge. The Board of Education presented a plan to the district federal court in 1977 as well as discussing whether Board actions illegally continued a segregated system after 1954. Since the suit was filed in 1972, the Justice Department, the NAACP, the city government, and a group of white Concerned Parents had intervened as plaintiffs. Defendants in the case included the School Board, the State Government, the State Commissioner of Education, and the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The case had not been settled; final arguments were to be made in October 1978.

A Magnet School Program was begun in Nichols City in 1976 as an attempt to provide greater educational options and to give parents the opportunity to choose a racially mixed (50-50 Black-White ratio of students was sought with a 20% variance allowed) learning environment for their children. This program was strictly voluntary.

The total Magnet School Program operated in 16 schools included:

1. Eleven schools offering a variety of educational options. These schools offered a strong general education program in science, mathematics, English, reading and social studies. Each Magnet School also offered an individualized program designed to stimulate the interest and meet the needs of students. This program was available for all students.

2. Five schools involved in pilot programs were offered in some neighborhoods. These programs emphasized basic skills necessary

for future success. The pilot programs were available for students in grades 4 through 12.

3. Two supplementary instructional projects were located in all Magnet Schools. The special projects placed emphasis on ethnic heritage, law, and consumer education.

DOUGLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Douglas District Project was directed by Dr. Michael Mitchell from its inception during the 1957-58 academic year until his resignation at the conclusion of the 1969-70 academic year. Dr. Mitchell initiated a program with the primary objective of raising the performance levels of students through increased teacher motivation, parental involvement, and student participation in learning activities. Funding for all of the programs came from the federal government and private foundations. Dr. Mitchell encouraged between-school competition within the district, both academic and athletic, and supported frequent meetings of teachers and administrators with parents and community leaders. Many enrichment and compensatory educational programs evolved from the frequent meetings of district office personnel, local school administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders, and students. The increased interest generated by Dr. Mitchell attracted national attention.

Great emphasis was placed on students' daily attendance, punctuality, academic achievement, student development of good study

habits, mental and physical hygiene, and self-respect. Parents were encouraged to attend P.T.A. meetings, volunteer at the local school, provide a quiet place for children to study, set a regularly scheduled time daily for homework or study assignments to be completed, register to vote, and visit the school often to become better acquainted with the school program and the school staff. Administrators and teachers were challenged to create and maintain a positive learning atmosphere in each local school. School staffs were encouraged to disregard I.Q. scores and to use achievement test score data diagnostically to help improve student achievement. Community groups were organized in an effort to give greater support to the local schools.

Some aspects of the Douglas District program included:

1. Peer-tutors: Students teaching other students.

2. Tele-tutor: A telephone line manned by teachers 4 nights a week whom children could call to get help with homework or class assignments.

3. Night visitors: Teachers who would visit the homes of various students for the purpose of explaining the school's program, answering questions, helping with homework and encouraging parents to designate a study place and a study time period at home.

4. Radio program: A weekly 15-minute broadcast using the school station owned by the Board of Education that focused on good study habits, achievement, and attendance at school for students.

5. Congress of Parents: Monthly meetings with parent representatives of all the schools in the district to discuss local and district educational concerns. (This could be viewed as a forerunner of Title I Parent Advisory Committees.)

6. District Spelling Bee: Contests within and between schools.

7. District Essay Contests: Contests within and between schools.

8. District Art Contests: Contests within and between schools.

9. District Choir: Made up of administrators, teachers and parents.

10. Honors Day Programs: Each school honored students for outstanding achievement, citizenship, and attendance. At these programs parent volunteers were also honored.

11. Night with Dr. Mitchell: Early in September, Dr. Mitchell would visit each school in the district and display charts demonstrating achievement levels for children in grades three through eight. These charts would compare each school by grade with the district, the city and national norms. Also, charts would be displayed that would reflect attendance percentages for the school, the district and the city.

The results of these and other programs in the district showed positive increases in achievement scores of the children in reading, language and arithmetic as measured by Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Absenteeism and tardiness were also reduced.

When Dr. Mitchell resigned to take a position in another city, Mr. Mark A. Cox was appointed district superintendent. Mr. Cox had previously worked as an assistant to Dr. Mitchell, therefore, many of the district's programs and activities continued. Recently, Mr. Cox received a promotion within the school system and Dr. Robert Newland was appointed district superintendent. Dr. Newland had not previously worked in Nichols City.

HARRY S. TRUMAN SCHOOL

Harry S. Truman School opened in 1959. Located in the Douglas District of the Nichols City School System, Truman was built to serve the people who populate the Aloe Housing Project near the downtown business district. The Aloe Housing Project contained 12 buildings that were 9 stories high. The residents of Aloe were lower income Blacks; many of the families included eight or nine members. In early 1978, 483 of the 558 apartments in Aloe were occupied; the number of people in each apartment varied from 1 to 12. A large public park was located near the housing project and a city recreation center was located one block away. There were a few small stores located in the immediate area of the housing project. Within two blocks of the school some residential housing was located; however, the school did not serve the people who populated this area. An eight-story senior citizen building, housing 125 senior citizens, was located one block from the school.

The Truman School and Staff

Principal

The Truman School had five principals since it opened in 1959. The first principal remained at the school until 1971 although he went on a leave of absence for three years. During his leave of absence, three persons served as acting principal. The principal of Truman School since 1971 had been Mr. Louis Powell. Mr. Powell had worked for the Nichols City Public Schools for 24 years, 17 of them as a teacher. In 1969, Mr. Powell was appointed principal of a school near Truman and was transferred to Truman in 1971. Staff members and parents described Mr. Powell as being a hard working, dedicated administrator. The following comment was typical of parental responses:

> He is always available to listen to your concerns and problems. Sometimes I think that he does more than he should. You see him in the yard at recess, in front of the school at noon and at dismissal time. He comes over into the "projects" after school if he thinks there is going to be any trouble.[4] I have never called him or gone to the school to see him when he did not have time or take time to listen and talk to me. As

[4]The term "projects" was used by staff members, parents, and students to mean the Aloe Housing Project.

far as I know, he always follows up on any problems and will do all he can to solve a problem. I can't think of anything more that he can do than he is already doing.

It was not unusual for Mr. Powell to come to the school on weekends and holidays. One teacher described Mr. Powell as follows:

He is always willing to listen. He tries to see things from the viewpoint of the teacher while also thinking about the student and the parent. I can best describe him as humane. He encourages all staff members to be honest and open with parents and students. Also, I can say that he is not afraid to say, "I don't know or I made a mistake." It is just a pleasure and a delight to work at this school and with him. We all operate as a family here and he is the head of the family.

Teachers

The staff at Truman School was diverse in terms of race and sex as shown in Table 3-4. The breakdown of personnel indicated that 25% of the staff was White while 75% was Black; 83% of the staff was female and 17% was male; 32% of the professional staff held Masters Degrees and all professional staff members had obtained Bachelor Degrees. The years of teaching experience among the professional staff ranged from 1 to 40 years with the mean

Table 3-4

Truman School Personnel

Personnel Classification	Race	Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Regular Classroom Teachers	White	1	6	7
	Black	1	10	11
Other Teaching Personnel	White	-	2	2
	Black	2	7	9
Administrators	Black	2	-	2
Noncertificated Personnel	White	1	3	4
	Black	2	15	17
Total		9	43	52

being 14 years of experience. At the time of this study, eight members of the professional staff were in their first year of teaching and 14 members of the professional staff had taught for 20 or more years. Five members of the staff had come to Truman School during the school's first year. The professional staff at Truman was very stable from 1959 to about 1970. Around 1970 some transferring of personnel began; however, the staff was still relatively stable. Until 1968 the teaching staff at Truman was all Black. When the staff balance program began in 1976, more White teachers were transferred to Truman. Two teachers who had taught at Truman for more than 10 years commented that the White staff members often experienced difficulty with student discipline and classroom control in their first year at Truman. However, these difficulties seemed to lessen after that first year. The following comment was made in this regard:

> The new white teachers seem to be a little weaker regarding discipline than the new black teachers. This is mainly because the new white teachers let the children get away with too much. However, after they get to know the children and the parents, things seem to improve. I think they come to realize that the children will take advantage of them if allowed to do so. Also, they come to realize that parents do not want their children acting unruly. The older members of the staff try

to help all we can without getting in the way. But I must add that teachers in general, black and white, are weaker in discipline matters than a few years ago. However, I know of no time where a child or parent and teacher have had any difficulty that was racial. Normally, it's just a matter of the teacher, black or white, and the student. Once the new teachers begin to gain more confidence in themselves they usually have far fewer problems.

A recurring theme was heard again and again at Truman School--the idea of "the Truman Family." The origin of this concept dated back to the first principal:

> The whole Truman School Family began with our first principal, Mr. Robert Robertson, who stressed working together, sharing ideas and materials and treating everyone humanely. That, of course, was Dr. Mitchell's philosophy. We viewed Mr. Robertson as the "Godfather." Therefore, the concept has just spread and it has become a way of life at this school. Faculty, parents, students, and everyone who comes into the building seem to sense it. We help each other at work and most of us socialize at one level or another away from work. We really take an active interest in each other without trying

to get too personal. It is just a way of life or mode of behavior at Truman School and we won't let it die.

Supportive Staff

The supportive staff at Truman School included teacher aides, custodial personnel, and cafeteria workers. The teacher aides fell into two categories--Teacher Aides I and Teacher Aides II. Teacher Aides I were persons who have completed high school but had not acquired 60 college credits. People in this category were allowed to work with children only under the direct supervision of a teacher. Teacher Aides II, on the other hand, were persons who had acquired at least 60 college credits and were allowed to provide direct instruction for the children. Teacher Aides II were also allowed to serve as substitute teachers for 45 days during each school year. Seventy-six percent of the teacher aides at Truman were classified as Teacher Aides II. One teacher aide commented on working at Truman School:

I feel that being an aide at the school helps me. Since I live in Aloe, the people feel that I represent the school. Therefore, I don't want people to feel that I am not worthy of working around their children, so I try to lead the kind of life that will be a good image for the children

to follow, I really feel that Truman School has helped me more than I have helped the school.

Another teacher aide had the following comments:

I like working at the school and I enjoy working with the children. Most of the people here are very nice but a few people want to make a difference between the aides and the teachers. They try to make the aides feel like they are not as good as the teachers. However, there aren't that many people here who act like that. I still like working here very much.

The custodial staff consisted of four full-time custodians, two males and two females. One other person at Truman worked with the custodial staff on a temporary basis as a CETA worker. (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act--a federally funded program for hard core unemployed people.) Two parents worked at the school as cafeteria workers serving breakfast and lunch to the children in a federally subsidized program.

Truman School Subpublics

The subpublics of the Truman School included parents, students, former students and nonparents.

Parents

Many of the parents of Truman School were employed; however, many of the families received A.D.C. All of the parents were Black and most would have been classified as low income. The educational backgrounds of parents varied considerably: some had attended or were attending college; others had not completed elementary school. No exact figures were available on the educational level of parents.

Students

At the time of the study, 628 students--all Black--were enrolled at Truman School. The student distribution by grade level was:

kindergarten-	80 students
1st grade-	119
2nd grade-	41
3rd grade-	63
4th grade-	63
5th grade-	76
6th grade-	59
7th grade-	65
8th grade-	51
ungraded special education-	11
Total	628 students

Thirty children were bussed to Truman School to take part in a special reading program. Five of the children in special education received bus passes to get to Truman on public transportation.

Other Subpublics

Two other significant subpublics of the Truman School were former students and senior citizens. Former students often return to Truman School to display their grades and discuss other achievements with various staff members. Some of these students from time to time volunteered to tutor students at Truman. The Truman School staff had made a conscious effort to involve senior citizens in the school program on a continuing basis. Details about how this was done will be discussed later in this chapter.

The Educational Programs at Truman School

The educational programs were of two basic types, a regular program and a compensatory program. The latter consisted of four federally funded projects.

Regular Program

The regular program at Truman School operated from kindergarten through grade eight. Classroom instruction was basically self-contained except for grades six, seven, and eight, which were called "the unit" at Truman School. In "the unit's" operation, children were ability grouped and taught in a departmentalized arrangement in the subject areas of reading, language and mathematics. To supplement the regular program, the Truman School utilized the services of a full-time physical education teacher. All children in grades four through eight took gym for two

45-minute periods weekly. The fifth-grade students used one of their 45-minute periods in a swimming program at the city recreational center located one block from the school. Other supplemental services were instrumental music, vocal music, and speech correction. Social services and health services were also provided. The school also provided a program for 11 children who were classified as educable mentally retarded (E.M.R.). These children were served by one teacher in a self-contained classroom arrangement.

Federal Programs

Reading With Understanding. The Reading With Understanding program taught students specific techniques to improve their reading skills by using materials from the content areas of social studies and mathematics. A reading specialist and a teacher aide used a variety of instructional materials to help motivate the students. All children in grades five through eight were eligible for this program and all took part in it.

Reading Improvement Team. The Reading Improvement Team (R.I.T.) program had as its primary objective the reduction of reading deficiencies of children. Students qualified for this program on the basis of an evaluation of reading achievement I.T.B.S. test scores: pupils rated from the 1st throughout the 40th percentile were eligible for inclusion. Procedurally, teachers selected students in the rank of their performance, a total of 50 children were selected in all.

Reading specialists worked with these children in small groups ranging in size from 3 to 12. These pupils attended reading classes two or three times a week for periods of 30-45 minutes each.

Mathematics Improvement Team. The Mathematics Improvement Team (M.I.T.) consisted of a mathematics specialist and a mathematics teacher aide. The primary objective of M.I.T. was the same as R.I.T. only the skill area concerned was mathematics. The eligibility guidelines for children were exactly the same. Children who ranked low in both reading and mathematics were eligible for both programs. The mathematics specialist and the mathematics aide worked with a maximum of 75 children; group sizes varied from 6 to 12 per class; the children normally attended classes two or three times a week for between 30-45 minutes per class.

Follow Through. The Follow Through program operated from kindergarten through grade three. Children in Follow Through kindergarten attended school all day and were assigned to a teacher with the teacher-pupil ratio being 20 to 1. Each Follow Through kindergarten teacher also was assigned a teacher aide called a Booth Attendant. The Booth Attendant helped the children to learn the alphabet and to begin to spell and write with the use of a typewriter. Many children left Follow Through kindergarten being able to write

short (two or three sentences) stories. The Follow Through teachers in grades one through three were also assigned a teacher aide to assist with classroom instruction. All classrooms were self-contained.

Follow Through also hired one person called a Parent Coordinator who helped organize parents of Follow Through children to provide input for program improvement on a continuing basis. This aspect of the Follow Through program will be detailed later.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM AT TRUMAN SCHOOL

The school-community relations program at Truman School may be discussed in terms of the school's programmatic activities (planned events), its nonprogrammatic activities (events and activities not planned on an on-going basis), and its use of the school-community relations variables of communication, involvement, participation, resolution, and access.

Programmatic Activities

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences at Truman School were held at the end of the 10th and 30th weeks of each school year. All schools in Nichols City followed the same procedure which became Board policy in 1974. However, Truman School had begun the activity of requesting and encouraging parents to come to the school for conferences with the child's teacher in 1973. Parent attendance at the conferences

normally ranged from 75-90%. Teachers called those parents who did not attend the scheduled conference to arrange alternate times that were mutually convenient. Most conferences lasted about 20 minutes. One teacher made the following comments concerning the parent conference day:

> This idea gives the teacher and the parent an opportunity to discuss the child's academic and social progress. We try to make sure that there is two-way communication, not a lecture. Parent turn-out is always good and some parents call to apologize if they are unable to come to school on that day.

The following comment is representative of parent opinion:

> I think it is a good idea to pick up my child's report card. This gives me a chance to ask any questions I want and it also gives me a chance to let the teacher know some things about my child that may help at school. I have found all the teachers to be friendly and willing to answer my questions.

Both parents and teachers seemed satisfied with the parent conferences.

Parent Advisory Committees

Three Parent Advisory Committees (P.A.C.) were operating at Truman School: a) Reading With Understanding; b) R.I.T.-M.I.T.;

c) Follow Through. The Reading With Understanding Program had a P.A.C. that met monthly. At these meetings, parents had an opportunity to provide input concerning the direction the program was taking and also to provide feedback concerning their child's reaction to the program. The coordinator of the program stated:

> Parents are encouraged to attend the meetings and make whatever comments they wish. We try to make the meetings meaningful so parents won't feel their time has been wasted. I always send a letter to the parents a week before the meeting and then follow up a couple of days before the meeting with telephone calls. Considering the number of parents that work, I think attendance is good. Normally, we have 20 to 25 people attending.

The Reading Improvement Team and Mathematics Improvement Team combined to form the second P.A.C. Meetings of the P.A.C. were also held monthly. Parents were given information concerning the guidelines for the program and were asked to give suggestions for improvement. Parents were encouraged to visit the classes and viewed demonstration lessons.

The third P.A.C. operating at Truman School was associated with the Follow Through Program. Follow Through provided a Parent Coordinator who helped organize the parents of Follow Through children. The parent coordinator, who arranged the monthly meetings and contacted all parent members by letter and telephone, was usually

a parent who lived in the school's attendance area. This P.A.C. organization usually had the largest turnout for meetings. One non-Follow Through staff member stated:

> Follow Through has the best P.A.C. This may be caused by the work of the parent coordinator or because parents usually respond better when the children are smaller. I do know that Follow Through has better parent turnout and more of those parents volunteer to help the teachers.

A Follow Through parent voiced this typically expressed opinion:

> I feel that I should help my child all I can, so when the parent coordinator calls I try to attend the meetings. Follow Through is a good program, and I am happy that my child is able to be a part of it. The meetings are interesting and I feel that the people are listening to my opinions. I really enjoy the learning games we make so I can work with my child at home. Also, at the meetings, we get good ideas on how to be a better parent. A lot of things we talk about there, I had not thought about before. Follow Through is very good for me and my child.

Many parents expressed great pleasure at the all day kindergarten aspect of the Follow Through program.

Senior Citizens Activities

The program of involving senior citizens who lived near Truman School was begun during the 1976-77 school year. Shortly before Christmas, 1977, a group of students went to the Senior Citizens Building and sang Christmas carols for the residents. The senior citizens were presented with Christmas cards made by the students at school.

Later in the school year pupils in the Reading With Understanding program constructed valentines for the senior citizens. Pupils assigned to the R.I.T. program presented the valentines to each of the adults.

In March 1978, the Truman School children received potted plants from the Board of Education Grounds Department as part of an Easter activity. Everyone who could, made macrame hangers for the plants. Pupils formed a choir and sang songs while others recited poetry. Two teacher aides sang solos. M.I.T. students made Easter baskets and dyed eggs. At the conclusion of the program, each senior citizen was given an Easter basket and a plant. Moreover, pupils carried gifts to those tenants who were physically unable to attend the program.

The Truman School commemorated Black History Week with students decorating their classroom doors depicting past and present contributions of Blacks to American History. Four senior citizens from the Aloe Senior Citizens Building volunteered to serve as judges.

First-place ribbons were awarded to classrooms whose doors were judged to be most representative of the theme.

The judges were met at the school entrance by the four Reading With Understanding student representatives. Each student became an assistant and guide to each judge. The students ate lunch with the judges, accompanied them throughout the school, and remained with them during the assembly program. One senior citizen made the following typical statement:

> It was very difficult to choose a winner. All the children seemed to have put in a lot of time on the decorations. I really wish all of the rooms could have received a ribbon for their good work. It really makes me feel good to be in the school and around the children.

A small plot of ground in the Aloe Senior Citizen's complex was dug up by Truman School students. Later a vegetable garden was planted for the adults who cultivated and harvested the crops. One resident of the senior citizen's complex commented:

> It is nice to know that some people have not forgotten about you. The children really do not have to do all these things for us. But, it sure makes us feel good. I am glad I live here near Truman School.

There appeared to be a high level of concern for and pride in this program on the parts of staff and students alike.

Parent Visits in October

Early in October of each school year, the parents of Truman School were invited to the school to meet their child's new teacher. The parent and the child came to the school, and the teacher explained the general procedures to be followed for the school year. Parents were encouraged to ask questions and voice their opinions concerning the teacher's presentation. Before the evening ended, all parents, children, and teachers assembled in the school's auditorium for a short talk by the principal and shared some refreshments.

Toy Lending Library

Parents of children in the Follow Through program were encouraged to borrow educational toys from the toy lending library. This service was provided for parents so that educational toys might be used by the children at home in the hope that those experiences would enhance the child's academic progress. Toys were borrowed for a two week period of time. Parents were urged to borrow no more than three toys at a time. A Follow Through parent made a representative comment on this service:

> I never knew all these things were available until I attended a Follow Through P.A.C. meeting. I feel that the service is helping my child and it gives me a good idea of the kind of toys I should be buying instead of just guns, boats, and dolls.

General satisfaction with this program was expressed by parents, teachers, and aides.

Workshops

Workshops were provided for staff members and parents on Saturdays at the Truman School. Although stipends were provided for a few of the workshops' participants, most involved no stipends. Some of the workshop topics were:

1. Various Learning Strategies.
2. Setting up Learning Stations at School and at Home.
3. Making Learning Bulletin Boards for School and Home.
4. Helping Children Take Standardized Tests.

Some teachers felt the workshops were invaluable as illustrated by the following comment:

> I don't mind giving up a half day on Saturday because I feel the workshops help me directly with classroom situations I deal with daily. The workshops are very practical, and they are conducted by staff members at Truman. I really don't need the stipend as an incentive. I feel that my time is more valuable than the rate of pay. Therefore, I come because I feel the workshops will help my students and me.

A parent also commented on the workshops:

> At first I was afraid to come to the workshops because there would be teachers there and I didn't know if I would fit in. But after coming to one workshop, I found that I could do some things better than some of the teachers and they could do some things better than me. They didn't seen to mind me doing better than them at something. After that I guess I realized that we are all just people. So now anytime there is a workshop given that looks interesting, I just sign up and come over to the school.

On Saturdays, Mrs. Jane Jones, of the Tenant Management Office for Aloe Housing Projects, conducted workshops for parents at Truman School. These workshops were designed to help residents build better relationships with their neighbors and with the school. Mrs. Jones attempted to explain how residents could help make decisions at the school and attempted to impress parents with the notion that the education of their children was a shared responsibility between the school and the home. Another thrust of the workshops emphasized how residents could be better neighbors, organize clean up crews, and help reduce crime in the Aloe Housing Project. A nonparent commented:

> These workshops give me a chance to get inside the school. I never come over here now because

> all of my children are grown. I think it is good that the school and the housing authority are trying to work together to make this a better neighborhood. We need more of this kind of thing.

A number of workshops were planned for the following school year.

College Credit Courses

The junior college located in Nichols City will begin a program by September 1978, for residents of the Aloe Housing Project. This program will be geared to providing college course offerings for any resident of Aloe beyond the age of 18. Classes will be held at Truman School and course offerings will vary with the needs and desires of the residents. Residents will only be required to pay for their books and other materials.

Tutors for Prep School

Five eighth grade students of the Truman School made preparations to take an entrance examination for a local, private prep school in January 1978. The examinations were held in May 1978. A former Truman student who had also attended the prep school and was attending a local private university volunteered to come to the school one afternoon per week to help the five students. The college student stated:

> I am happy to give my time to help my young Brothers. A lot of people at Truman helped me and are still helping me. I feel that it is a very small thing that I am doing. It is a very different world when you get in the kind of atmosphere you find at that school. I was not really psychologically prepared for it. I was ready academically but not psychologically. So, if I can help these Brothers, maybe they will be able to make a quicker adjustment than I did. I feel that they will be ready academically when they graduate from Truman. We are mainly dealing with developing the proper mind set needed to survive at that school. I just wish someone could have done the same for me. However, when May rolls around, we will be ready.

The five students stated that the help received was most valuable.

Faculty Dinner

The entire staff of the Truman School and their families attended an annual Christmas night out. The group had a dinner at a local supper club that featured a stage play which followed dinner. One faculty member made the following comment:

> This kind of activity helps to point out to everyone (teachers, nonteachers, aides, other

> parents who work at the school) how much more similar we are than different. When the staff is together with their family, I think it helps to bring us closer together and everyone is seen as just another human being, regardless of color or position at school.

Another faculty activity was planned for the end of the school year.

Service Club

The service club was composed of 12 girls and 8 boys in grades four through eight. The girls sold candy, pickles, popcorn, and donuts at recess and during the noon hour. The profits from these activities were spent as determined by the service club with guidance from their sponsor, Mr. Joseph James, administrative assistant of Truman. The service club girls acted as line monitors and room monitors when needed; the service club boys acted as a patrol force for the school and also provided an escort service for children who became ill at school and had to leave school before the regular dismissal times. The service club sponsored "canned good dances" at the school. The children were to bring a canned good to school as their admission to the dance. The canned goods were collected and distributed to needy families identified by the school social worker. The service club also voted money out of their treasury to purchase chickens or hens to go along with

the canned goods and provided 15 baskets at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas for needy families.

An example of the use of the service club's monies was illustrated by an event which occurred at the conclusion of a night-time school activity. After two teachers discovered that their headlights had been shattered, the service club voted to make money from their treasury to pay for the damage.

Before school closed for the Christmas Holidays, the staff of Truman School sponsored a dinner for the service club members. Staff members acted as waiters and waitresses at the dinner. Later in the school year, the service club sponsored an appreciation dinner for the staff of the school with the service club members and their parents preparing the food. The sponsor of the service club said:

> This is really a beautiful thing. The boys usually get along well together, but we had to do something about the girls being so petty. You can really notice a change in these girls. This is only a start, but if these 12 girls can begin to modify their behavior, I think it shows that all they need is a degree of responsibility with a dose of guidance to begin to act like young ladies. One of our service girls got in a fight after school one day. The service club voted to suspend her for a month. The girl asked

> me to readmit her and I wanted to but I had to go along with the service club's decision. She made a speech to the service club at the end of her month's suspension. She basically stated that now she really realized what it meant to pay for your mistakes. I think that was a lesson for the service club and for many other students also.

The membership of the service club was to be expanded in September 1978.

Dress Code

A committee of teachers, parents, and students along with the principal formulated a dress code for the school two years ago. After much discussion, the dress code regulations were sent home by the children to parents. There seemed to be general approval of the dress code; however, one parent stated:

> I don't know who made up the rules. I just wish some parents had something to say about these things before they are sent home.

The dress code regulations were to be reviewed annually with a notice sent to parents in an attempt to gather parent in-put.

Graduation

A committee composed of eighth-grade teachers, parents, and students plan all graduation activities. This process seemed

effective, but a few negative comments were noted. The following statement expressed this negative feeling:

> I think that Mr. Brown, an eighth-grade teacher, has his mind made up before the meeting begins and all we are supposed to do is agree. I just don't feel that it is important enough to argue about, but I wish parents could have more to say about what the children can wear for graduation. Mr. Brown acts like the children are 10 years old.

This continuing program planning for graduation was one area where some displeasure with an activity was noted.

Clothes for the Needy

The social worker at Truman School solicits clothing from staff members. This clothing is then distributed to needy families in the school's attendance area.

One-Two-Three Christmas Store

The One-Two-Three Christmas Store was the idea of a third-grade teacher, Mrs. Long, at Truman School. Mrs. Long and her third-grade class organized a department store with a dress shop, jewelry shop, shoe department, boys' clothes shop, restaurant, and gift wrapping department. The class hired other students to work in the store.

Donations were obtained from large department stores in the downtown business district. Store personnel came to the school to

train children in sales technique, gift wrapping, and modeling. Items on sale ranged in price from 1¢ to $10.00. The store opened at Truman School the Monday before Christmas. A ribbon cutting ceremony was carried out and the Mayor of Nichols City cut the ribbon. This event was shown on television that evening over the local N.B.C. and C.B.S. affiliates. The store was open at specific hours for a five-day period leading up to the Christmas Holidays during the school day and students, parents, and neighborhood people were made welcome. The principal of Truman School made these comments:

> This was a real learning experience. Who would have thought that third-grade children could do something like that? All segments of the community were involved. I think this experience will live with all of us for sometime to come.

This activity was to be continued on an annual basis.

Picnics

Various rooms, usually around the same grade level, organized picnics for the children during spring time. Most parents accompanied their children on those picnics and they became family outings. Usually children attended one picnic each school year.

Field Trips

Field trips were organized by teachers to broaden the cultural background of the children and to provide a different kind of

learning experience. Parents were continually encouraged to accompany the children on those field trips. Most children took two field trips per year.

Room Parties

At various times during the school year, room parties were held for the children. Parents donated food and beverages for these affairs and often attended.

Sales

A variety of items were sold at Truman School. The sales were sponsored by a teacher or a group of teachers. These activities included:

1. Book Fair: This event was sponsored by the R.I.T. teachers. Children and parents were encouraged to purchase books that the children would enjoy reading. This event was held one time per year.

2. School Pictures: A commercial photographer came to take the picture of the children. Parents were allowed to bring pre-school age children to school to be photographed also. This event took place one time per year.

3. Bake Sale: Parents were asked to donate bakery goods about three times a year. Parents were also encouraged to volunteer to help sell these goods.

4. Tote Bag Sale: Once a year tote bags were sold at the school. Children and parents purchased this item which was useful for carrying a variety of materials.

5. T-Shirt Sale: T-shirts and sweatshirts which displayed the school's name were sold annually. Staff members, students, and some parents purchased these items.

6. Ink Pen Sale: Ink pens were sold which display the school's name. Parents, staff, and students purchased these pens. The sale of these pens served to advertise the school and to make a profit.

Teachers were encouraged to demonstrate their creativity by making suggestions for other sale activities.

Summary of Programmatic Activities

A wide variety of programmatic activities were carried out by the Truman School throughout the school year. There seemed to be a conscious effort made to involve all segments of the school and the community in those activities. The school projected a friendly, positive image to its subpublics. A genuinely positive feeling about the school was apparent. Few people were identified who had any negative comments concerning the school's programs. Staff members worked well together and seemed to enjoy their experiences at Truman School. Innovation and creativity appeared to flourish in the atmosphere that prevailed at the school.

Nonprogrammatic Activities

Former Students

Former students often stopped by the school to visit various staff members. These young people used such occasions to display their report cards from high school or college, to discuss problem situations they were facing, and/or to just visit with staff members. From time to time former students sought the assistance of staff members with class assignments or homework assignments from high school or college. A nonteaching male staff member at Truman School made the following statement:

> A lot of former students stop by to see me and show me their report cards. The believe that I am interested in them and the work they are doing. I have known many of them since they were babies. They seem to see me and some other people here as a substitute family. I try to encourage them, loan them money, or do whatever I can. They know that if I don't get my money returned that I will not let them have any more. It is never a large amount but I feel it is worth the risk. I am a kind of substitute father for a lot of the boys and maybe for some, the closest thing they know to what a father is.

Staff members seemed proud that many former students returned to the school for visits.

Telephone Calls

Teachers often received telephone calls from parents and former students. Parents also called the school by using the pay telephone number for the telephone located in the hall outside of the principal's office. Teachers did not hesitate to call the homes of students if they were late or absent. Teachers and other staff members often called parents in an effort to obtain volunteers to aid in a school project or activity. Both the office telephone and the pay telephone were busy throughout the day.

Pop Calls

"Pop Calls" a term commonly used by parents and staff members, may best be described as unscheduled visits by parents. At various times of the school day and after regular school hours, parents came into the school to talk with teachers and the principal. One parent commented:

> I come over to the school when I feel the need. Often I don't call the teacher or the principal and I don't tell my children I am planning to come. Sometimes I don't know in the morning that I am going to come to the school that day. The secretaries are always friendly and the teachers and principal make you feel welcome.

> I like to stop by to see how the children are doing at times other than when parent conference days come up.

"Pop calls" seemed to be an accepted norm at Truman School and parents seemed to feel free to exercise this option on a "needs to" basis.

Summary of Nonprogrammatic Activities

The nonprogrammatic activities noted at Truman School indicated that a very positive relationship existed among staff, students, parents, and former students. People felt that the school door was open to them and they did not hesitate to come into the school at any time. Staff members make visitors feel welcome and this welcome gave every appearance of being genuine and sincere.

Utilization of School-Community Relations Variables

Communication

Communication was defined as a variable of the home-school-community relations model which utilized many forms of interaction among various subpublics and between the school and the subpublics. The staff at Truman School employed a variety of communication mechanisms in an attempt to keep its out-of-school subpublics informed of school activities.

Bulletins. The major school-wide mechanism used was the distribution of bulletins which originated in the prinicpal's office. These bulletins included notices for meetings, announcements of school activities, and general information. The bulletins were distributed to classrooms, given to the children by the teachers, and carried to parents by the children. Most bulletins contained a tear-off portion at the bottom which required the parent's signature or other parental responses. This procedure began in 1976 because staff members had become convinced that many bulletins were never carried home by the children or were not being read by the parents. One parent said:

> I like the idea of signing that I have read the bulletins and also being able to make some comments. It gives me the feeling that my opinion does count.

Great satisfaction was expressed with this procedure.

Notes and Letters. Notes and letters to parents from teachers were used to inform parents of the child's behavior, discipline matters, or various accomplishments. The principal encouraged teachers to keep parents up to date on what their children were doing. A weekly progress letter was sent home to parents by six teachers in grades six, seven, and eight. This letter pointed out to parents

what their child accomplished in a particular week and what would be taught the upcoming week. The bottom portion of the progress letter was to be sent back to school signed by the parent with any comments the parent wished to make.

Telephone Calls. The majority of staff members at Truman School used the telephone to contact parents. The telephone seemed to be the vehicle used most often by school personnel to contact parents. Many teachers made telephone calls to parents from their homes at night. Teachers were urged by the principal to contact all parents of children assigned to their classrooms early in the school year. Some problems associated with phoning included unlisted numbers and disconnections. Some teachers stated that they encouraged parents to call them at home in the evenings when more time was available for long discussions. One teacher stated:

> I encourage parents to call me at home, and I call all of my parents from home. I don't want to lose the class time calling from school unless it is an emergency.

Weekend telephone calls to parents were made by a number of teachers.

Parent Conferences. Parent Conferences were held in November and April of each school year. No children attended school on parent conference days and the school was opened from 1:30 PM to 8:00 PM.

The parent conference days were held on the Thursday of the 11th and 31st weeks of the school year. Forms were sent to parents and the most convenient time for a conference was checked by the parent. Coordination of parent conferences had proved to be difficult for both teachers and parents. A teacher commented:

> Scheduling is the biggest problem because you have no idea what is the best time for a parent. Also, you don't like to keep two or three parents waiting while you talk to another parent. Another problem is that it seems that the parents sometimes come in bunches. You may not have a conference for 45 minutes and then, suddenly, three parents will show up at the same time. I try not to, but I am sure that I rush one person and therefore I am rude because I am trying not to be rude by having the other parents waiting for a long time. But even with the problems, I think this is a good method of communicating with parents. We are working to get the bugs out.

The principal estimated that the usual turn out for parent conferences was between 80% and 85% for the school. Some teachers estimated that the usual turn out for their class was closer to 75%. The principal stated:

> We are generally happy with the turn out. Of course, like everything, it could be improved. It would be good if we could schedule better and give each parent about 30 minutes with each teacher. The system has improved greatly over time.

Generally, each teacher prepared a folder of classroom work for each child in preparation for parent conference day. Also contained in the folder were notes the teacher had written about the student, standardized achievement scores, and attendance records. If an aide was assigned to the classroom, that aide sat in on the conference and made comments. Parents were encouraged to make comments and ask questions. Occasionally, however, time did not permit long discussions. This lack of time was seen as a concern by teachers and parents. A teacher commented:

> We want to develop two-way communication, but sometimes we get parents stacked up and so we have to rush through our talk and parents don't get much of a chance to say anything. But if we can, we like to get comments, questions, and suggestions from parents.

A parent commented:

> I am so worn out from going from teacher to teacher that I almost fall out by the time I get home. Some teachers take a lot of time

> with you, but a few rush you out of the room. I have a problem in that I have two children in high school so when I leave Truman I am only beginning. By the time I get through talking with 10 teachers at the high school, after talking with four here, I don't want to talk for a week.

The problem indicated above was mentioned by a number of parents. One parent commented:

> I have three children here and two in high school. I get off work at 5:00 PM and then I have to go to two schools. I can't see some of my children's teachers and skip seeing the others. I don't ask any questions and I don't make many comments because I am trying to finish and get back home before dark.

Teachers called the parents who did not come to pick up their child's report cards on parent conference day and attempted to schedule another time for the conference. If after one week this effort had proved fruitless, the report card was sent home and was to be returned by the child bearing the parent's signature.

Special Conferences. A special conference was called by the principal if a child had created a special discipline problem or was

experiencing academic problems of a special kind. The parent was notified by telephone and letter. The letter might be sent home by a brother or sister of the child in question. (Little faith was expressed in the U.S. Postal Service because the mailboxes of Aloe residents were not secure.) After the telephone call had been made and the letter sent to the parent, a conference time was arranged. (A child could be sent home for up to three days by the principal for discipline problems.) Seldom did a parent ignore the request for a conference. In the few cases where this had happened, the principal sent the child home for three days; however, the parent had always appeared by the third day. When the parent arrived at school, a conference was held with the principal, teacher, parent, and student. Normally, the problem was resolved and no further action was needed. The principal kept a record of all conferences so that this record could be used as a reference if another conference was required.

Room Newspaper. A Truman School newspaper was published by a second grade teacher and her students. The cost for the newspaper was 5¢. Children were encouraged to purchase the newspaper and take it home so their parents could read it. Events covered in the newspaper included:

1. classroom activities
2. field trips recently taken

3. upcoming events
4. stories on former students
5. health hints
6. awards received by anyone in the school
7. poems written by students
8. puzzles and jokes

Students were encouraged to submit poems, jokes, and articles for the newspaper.

Nichols City School Newspaper. The Nichols City Public Schools mailed a monthly newspaper to parents that featured articles about various schools and activities that took place throughout the city. Each district had an opportunity to utilize one page of each edition. Truman School was usually mentioned in every edition of this publication.

Special Newsletters. Title I and Follow Through periodically published a newsletter that was sent home by the children involved in those programs. Truman School was usually mentioned in both publications.

Summary. Truman School used a variety of techniques to communicate with parents. The telephone was the most widely used vehicle to accomplish this objective. Bulletins were also regarded as a good means to communicate with parents since their receipt could be

relatively assured (a tear-off portion of the bulletin was usually returned by the child after being signed by the parents). Parents and teachers had made positive comments about the parent conference days. On the other hand scheduling seemed to be an unresolved concern and some complaints were voiced over the lack of time alloted for each conference.

Involvement

Involvement was defined as a variable of the home-school-community relations model through which various subpublics contributed resources of time, energy, and expertise to a school. Some activities mentioned under communication might also be viewed as involvement activities. For example, attendance at parent conferences and special conferences involved the expenditure of time and energy for parents. Such activities were not re-examined.

Volunteering for Field Trips. Parents were encouraged to accompany pupils on educational field trips. Parents helped supervise the children and were provided with ideas for family outings of educational value. A parent commented:

> I try to go on as many field trips as I can. It helps me to learn more about the city and what it has to offer.

A teacher added:

> We all urge parents to go on field trips because

> it helps with supervision. It also helps develop a closer relationship between the teacher and the parents.

Parents generally expressed a desire to supervise field trips.

Bake Sales. Most parents interviewed stated that when requested they would typically send bakery goods to the school. Parents also volunteered to sell the goods on the day of the event. A teacher made the following comment:

> All you have to do is call the parents and they will send more cakes, pies, and cookies than you can sell. It's a little harder for them to volunteer their time.

A nonteaching staff member added:

> I often make calls for the teachers when we have a bake sale. Very seldom do I get turned down. Most people will respond if you ask them. Most of the staff members will also contribute when we have a bake sale.

The following statement was made by a parent:

> I am glad to send something to the school when I know about it. I guess I feel a little guilty because I work during the day and can not come to the school and help out.

> So I always send something to make up for not being there in person.

On two occasions, bake sales were extended into the afternoon because parents had sent more bakery goods than could be consumed during the morning hours.

Donations. Parents were asked to make donations of canned goods and old clothing from time to time during the school year. Additionally, parents were asked to volunteer their time to help box the canned goods and wrap the clothing. The response was generally good, but it seemed that there was a cadre of parents who were willing to volunteer their time while other parents cooperated by sending to school whatever was requested. A parent who often volunteered time and goods commented:

> Many parents who can will donate whatever you ask for but getting them to give their time is another thing. No matter what it is you find the handful of parents you always find here giving their time.

A staff member stated:

> You can get the parents to donate whatever you ask for but not as many will give their time. You can only really depend on the "faithful few" to always show up.

> There is a danger that we might burn them out.

No parent or staff member suggested a solution to the problem of increasing parent involvement in this activity.

Tax Campaign. Truman School encouraged parents to register to vote in tax and other elections. Various kinds of activities were carried on which involved parents during a school tax election, including:

1. encouraging other parents to register to vote
2. passing out literature to neighbors
3. serving as poll watchers (a poll watcher checks the names of people as they vote)
4. calling neighbors on voting day to encourage them to vote
5. babysitting for neighbors while the neighbor goes to the polls to vote

A parent made the following statement:

> I help in any way I can but a lot of parents just don't seem to care. They won't vote no matter what you do.

A staff member commented:

> We have a few parents who will help in the tax campaigns but most parents are hard to reach. It gets discouraging at times but you keep trying.

There appeared to be a degree of voter apathy on the part of parents.

Room Parents. Parents were urged to serve as "room parents" and supervise classrooms when teachers attended inservice meetings that lasted less than 3 hours. Parents were not asked to teach the children, however, their only responsibility was to supervise the children and attempt to maintain order in the classroom. The response from parents was mixed. A teacher commented:

> I never have any problem getting a parent to volunteer to serve as a room parent. I try to get at least three of four parents to commit themselves so I have some back up.

Another teacher commented:

> I don't try anymore. It is more trouble than it is worth. A few years ago, I got good cooperation but now I have given up and work out other arrangements.

A parent who served as a room parent said:

> The first time I did it, I was scared to death. But I got through it all right. I don't know how teachers can do that every day. If more parents were room parents, they would appreciate what teachers have to

go through. I know I wouldn't want to try to teach every day.

The response teachers received from parents concerning this activity appeared to be related to the expectations of the teacher.

Summary. Involvement activities at Truman School generally requested parents to donate time, energy, and material goods. Parents were very responsive in donating material goods. However, only a small group of parents were dependable when time and energy were requested. Many staff members commented that this reaction was typical of the responses to requests of parents to donate their time and energy to the schools throughout Nichols City.

Parent involvement in P.A.C. activities required the contribution of time, skill, and expertise. However, this aspect of the school-community-relations program will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter which addresses participation and resolution.

Participation

Participation was defined as a variable of the home-school-community relations model which provided entree to the decision- and policy-making processes of a school. One formal participation arrangement existed at Truman School. The Parent Advisory Committee, mandated by Title I, served as the vehicle by which parents provided input to help make decisions at the school.

P.A.C. Membership on the Parent Advisory Committees (P.A.C.) at Truman was voluntary and parents were elected to various organizational positions. There were three active P.A.C.'s at Truman School: a) the combined Reading Improvement Team and Mathematics Improvement Team Committee, b) the Reading With Understanding Committee and c) the Follow Through Advisory Committee. Each P.A.C. was charged with the duties of evaluating current programs and making recommendations for improvements.

The Reading Improvement Team-Mathematics Improvement Team (R.I.T.-M.I.T.) committee met once a month. Parents suggested improvements concerning the program. Comments made by a parent and a staff member follow:

A parent stated:

> I work with the R.I.T.-M.I.T. P.A.C. and we meet monthly to discuss what we think about the program. It is hard to tell what I think because I don't know what should be taught or how to teach it. I usually go along with whatever the teachers say. I figure, they should know.

A staff member stated:

> We (teachers) normally bring suggestions to the meetings for the full committee to vote on. It

> seems that the professional staff has to provide guidance for parents. Even when we ask for suggestions for improvements, most parents don't have any. They may be intimidated by teachers. That shouldn't be but I suspect it is. We vote on all matters but to be honest, the agenda is pretty well set before the meeting and it normally goes the way the teachers plan.

The chairperson of the committee felt that parents were taking the committee's work seriously.

The Reading With Understanding P.A.C. operated through a committee of elected parents. The coordinator of the program provided parents with information about the program and solicited their feedback. There was little evidence that parents were actually making many basic decision concerning the operation of the program. The coordinator appeared very sincere in seeking meaningful input, but there seemed to be little forthcoming.

The Follow Through P.A.C. was organized along the same lines as the previous two programs discussed. Attendance at these meetings was larger than was true of the other committees. Follow Through had the advantage of a Parent Coordinator who spent a considerable amount of time attempting to get parents to attend meetings. The Follow Through meetings were generally the same as the other two with the exception that there seemed to be an

attempt made to provide parents with more suggestions for working with their children at home.

Summary. In each of the three groups, the P.A.C. parents became greatly involved with discussions concerning fund-raising activities such as a bake sale. Most policy decisions were made by the professional staff of the school. Parents served mainly to ratify the opinions and suggestions brought forth by the professionals.

The P.A.C. is also discussed as a vehicle through which conflict may be resolved. Therefore, P.A.C. is also addressed in the following section of the chapter that concerns resolution.

Resolution

Resolution was defined as a variable of the home-school-community relations model which was designed to solve problems and to reduce actual or potential conflic among the home, the school, and the community. Most resolution activities took place in a nonprogrammatic manner, largely involving face-to-face meetings concerning pupil placement and discipline.

Pupil Placement. Truman School had no formal programmatic procedures designed to elicit parent desires regarding pupil placement. However, many parents expressed the view that being able to discuss and recommend changes in a pupil's assignment helped to reduce or

avoid conflict. The accessibility of the principal and the teachers seemed to be critical to the resolution process. The parental comments concerning pupil placement that follow were typical of statements made by many parents:

> Mr. Powell and I talked about the room my child was in. I told him I felt she might do better in another room. He listened and told me, he would look into it and let me know. I don't know who else he talked to but my child was moved to another room.

> My child was having problems in one room and I had to come to school for a conference with the principal and the teacher. They asked me what I thought and I told them that I thought my daughter would do better in another room because all of her little friends were in the room with her now. They decided to move her.

> I had two children in the same room last year. So I went to school and told the principal that they would do better if they were not in the same room. The principal said that he was glad that I had told him. In September, they were in different rooms.

> My child was in the same room with his cousin but the teacher didn't know they were cousins. At the parent conference, I told her this and a lot of problems in the room could be settled if they were separated. We talked to the principal that night and they were separated. Both of them did a lot better after that.

It appeared that the resolution process regarding pupil placement was handled informally and parents perceived themselves as having a direct impact on this process.

Discipline. Discipline matters were handled by the principal or the administrative assistant. When teachers determined that the classroom situation had developed to the point that additional resources were needed, the matter was brought to the attention of one or both of the administrators. Parents were informed of the situation by telephone and/or letter. Normally a conference was scheduled if the situation was serious enough. The conference involved the administrator(s), the teacher, the parent, and the child. Generally, the parent was asked to make comments or suggestions toward the resolution of the problem. One parent recounted the following:

> My daughter had a problem in gym class when some older boys walked into the girls' dressing area while she was dressing. I don't know if

> the gym teacher knew about it or not. We really didn't know about it at first, but my wife overheard my daughter talking to one of her friends. I went to see the principal the next day, and he got the kids' names and talked to them and as far as I know, that kind of think has not occurred again.

Another parent commented:

> My child got into a fight at school and I had to come to school for a conference. I told the principal and the teacher that they could call me anytime about any problems. I suggested that they not let him do some of the special things around the school that he had done until he straightened up. They took my suggestion.

Occasionally, corporal punishment was used in discipline matters. Corporal punishment was only supposed to be administered by the principal in the presence of a teacher or vice versa. It appeared that this measure was used only as a last resort. As the principal stated:

> I only use that (corporal punishment) when all else fails. I feel that you shouldn't have to use it with a child everyday or else it is obviously having no positive effect.

One parent commented:

> They (principal and teacher) have my permission to whip my children, if they need it. No one is going to kill them and I believe that it will teach them that the teachers mean business.

Another parent said:

> As long as the teacher doesn't bruise them, it's all right with me. They did it to me when I was in school and it didn't hurt me.

The administrative assistant commented:

> I feel we should try to get away from corporal punishment. We use it sometimes but it is better and longer lasting if you can reason with the children and get them to see what is wrong with what they are doing.

An aspect of pupil placement occasionally entered into discipline matters. This type of pupil placement did not involve a change in room assignment but rather a change in the seating arrangement within the classroom. Two representative comments by parents follow:

> I came to school for a conference and told the teacher to move my daughter away from her friends and she would stop playing so much and get down to business. It seems to have worked.

> I was sick in bed and couldn't make it to the school for the conference. So I called the principal and told him I thought he needed to move her away from the crowd she hangs around with. He said he would try that. When I got better and went to the school, the principal and the teacher said that she was not giving the teacher any more trouble.

One parent reacted differently:

> I really don't care one way or the other. I just don't think it's right to tell someone else what they can wear. Everybody doesn't have enough money to by a lot of different things.

A key to resolution seems to be captured in the philosphy of the principal. He is low keyed and soft spoken. He said:

> I try to reason with parents and remain rational. You lose the parents if you lose your temper. About the only thing useful that I can use at school from graduate school is the technique one professor stressed. I find that it works. I let the parent blow off steam and when they calm down, I just ask, "Now, what do you want to do about it?" I find that it helps if I just listen and after a

> while, we can get something done. Sometimes the parent leaves the school mad but every-time I have been able to use that technique, the parent will call or come back and apologize for the way they acted. The one time I lost my temper, I could have kicked myself because I didn't maintain control. I called that parent and apologized to her. That kind of caught her off guard.

It appeared that resolution was carried out in an informal manner. Most resolution concerns dealt with individual children and their problems.

Summary. Resolution at Truman School took place in an informal manner. Face-to-face meetings concerning pupil placement or discipline concerns were resolved in a rational manner. The principal was the key in these efforts; his manner, his mode of behavior, and his philosophy were positive forces that lead to the reduction or avoidance of conflict. Other staff members took their cue from the principal and reacted in a similar manner.

Access

Access was defined as a variable of the home-school-community relations model which assured that various community subpublics

were able to have their interests represented in the school. Members of a community supublic might represent themselves or might choose to be represented by an advocate or advisor who served as a trusted confidant. This person might be a staff member, such as a teacher or the principal, or any other member of the local school community.

Practically all parents interviewed stated that access was gained personally. That is, if parents had a concern, interest, or a point of view, they would personally transmit that concern, interest, or point of view to school personnel. Most parents stated that they would talk directly with the principal by telephone or in person. Few parents nominated any staff member other than the principal as the person through whom access was gained. A large percentage of the parents interviewed stated that they had never had any concerns, interests or points of view that they wanted to express, but most parents were confident that the access mechanism was present, if needed. One parent stated:

> I know the principal is there and he will
> listen so if I am concerned about something
> I would just call him or go to the school.

Another parent said:

> Mr. Powell would handle whatever it is, so
> I would just call him.

One parent had a concern that she had discussed with two parents but had never mentioned the concern to any staff member. The parent said:

> I am concerned about the school not having a shower. As the children get older, they need to take a shower after gym. I have talked to my friends about it but no one else.

One parent said:

> I work doing the day so I depend on a relative I have who works at the school. If I have a concern, I tell my relative about it. If it is something I consider serious, I will come to school myself.

Hence access was gained mainly through the principal. Most parents did not utilize this option. Most parents perceived the ability to get their concerns to the school. Most parents, also, would gain access personally and not through a trusted confidant.

Conclusions

The variables of resolution, communication, and access appeared to be the most frequently used means to developing positive school-community relationships. Parents felt that they played a role in the reduction of conflict and the settling of differences. A wide variety of communication patterns were used to get the school's messages to parents. Access was gained personally through

the principal. Parents felt that they had the ability to get their concerns to the school though few parents exercised this option.

Involvement and participation appeared to be less useful strategies. Parents donated material goods readily, but only a few parents were dependable when it came to their contribution of time, energy, or expertise. Participation as a link to the decisions parents helped make was almost totally absent. Parents attended P.A.C. meetings but most policy matters were nominated by professional staff members. Generally, parents merely ratified the suggestions or proposals presented. Parents entered discussions concerning fund raising activities. Therefore, the P.A.C. was treated much like a P.T.A. committee.

Summary

The Nichols City Public Schools operated with a 12-member Board of Education that generated policy decisions. The Superintendent of Schools acted as the general supervisor of the entire school system. He was aided by a Deputy Superintendent and four associate superintendents. The five district superintendents and their district assistants directly supervised the day to day operations of the various schools. Local principals operated the individual schools following general guidelines transmitted to them by the district superintendents.

The Truman School was located in the Douglas District. The Douglas District had a history of involving parents in school

activities that dated back to its first district superintendent, Dr. Mitchell. The Truman School was born into an environment of parental involvement and community input. The school had developed and maintained a feeling of "family" among the staff, students, parents, and community. The school was located in a high poverty area populated by lower-income Blacks. The staff of the school generated a friendly, warm environment that created a positive learning milieu. The staff was relatively stable and would probably experience little turmoil as the school system sought to achieve a 70-30 Black-White teacher ratio by September 1978. Teacher aides lived in the immediate community and were seen as positive communication links to the community. A special effort was made by the school to be sensitive to former students and senior citizens. Classroom organization followed the self-contained model with most teachers using the services of teacher aides. Four federal programs operated at the school and all of them made positive contributions with Follow Through receiving a high level of praise. A host of programmatic activities were carried on throughout the school year with innovation and creativity demonstrated. Nonprogrammatic activities were handled within a positive framework. Former students and parents were made welcome at all times.

Resolution, communication, and access appeared to be the most useful home-school-community relations variables. Parents felt they made a positive impact toward settling differences and

reducing or avoiding conflict. A wide variety of communication activities were used by the school with bulletins which had a feed back mechanism built in; however, parent-teacher conferences and the telephone were the most effective methods. Parents sensed the ability to get their concerns to the school through the principal, although few parents actually utilized the opportunity to do so. Involvement was high when parents were requested to donate material goods but much lower when time, energy, and expertise were requested. Participation through the P.A.C.'s was very weak. Although most parents were active in fund raising activities, parents made less of an impact on the school's decision-making structure.

Truman School carried on a tradition of parent involvement, concern for the community, and was clearly actively seeking to create a positive learning environment for the students. Staff members worked well together and were ably led by a low-keyed principal who demonstrated a sensitivity for the staff, students, parents, and community.

Center Planning and Policy Committee

Richard A. Rossmiller
Wayne Otto
Center Co-Directors

Dale D. Johnson
Area Chairperson
Studies in Language:
Reading and Communication

Marvin J. Fruth
Area Chairperson
Studies of Implementation
of Individualized Schooling

Penelope L. Peterson
Area Chairperson
Studies of Instructional Programming
for the Individual Student

James M. Lipham
Area Chairperson
Studies of Administration and
Organization for Instruction

Thomas A. Romberg
Area Chairperson
Studies in Mathematics and Evaluation
of Practices in Individualized Schooling

Associated Faculty

Vernon L. Allen
Professor
Psychology

B. Dean Bowles
Professor
Educational Administration

Thomas P. Carpenter
Associate Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Louise J. Cherry
Assistant Professor
Educational Psychology

William J. Davis
Assistant Professor
Educational Administration

W. Patrick Dickson
Assistant Professor
Child and Family Studies

Lloyd E. Frohreich
Associate Professor
Educational Administration

Marvin J. Fruth
Professor
Educational Administration

Dale D. Johnson
Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Herbert J. Klausmeier
V.A.C. Henmon Professor
Educational Psychology

Joel R. Levin
Professor
Educational Psychology

James M. Lipham
Professor
Educational Administration

Dominic W. Massaro
Professor
Psychology

Donald M. McIsaac
Professor
Educational Administration

Wayne Otto
Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Penelope L. Peterson
Assistant Professor
Educational Psychology

Thomas S. Popkewitz
Associate Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Gary G. Price
Assistant Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

W. Charles Read
Associate Professor
English and Linguistics

Thomas A. Romberg
Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Richard A. Rossmiller
Professor
Educational Administration

Peter A. Schreiber
Associate Professor
English and Linguistics

B. Robert Tabachnick
Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Gary G. Wehlage
Associate Professor
Curriculum and Instruction

Steven R. Yussen
Associate Professor
Educational Psychology

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